North Korea pulls out of int'l nuke arms control treaty

Story below, Col. 1

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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AT A GLANCE

- Signed 2 laws: Enabling banks to unload P500-B bad loans; and tightening state bidding procedures.
- Asked Congress to pass key bills: Inflation-linked "sin taxes" on alcohol, tobacco; restructure taxes for automobiles; securitization act which makes accessible long-term capital to more people; transform BIR into an autonomous entity.
- To work on law for agri lands as collateral.
- To create Natural Resources Mining Dev. Corp.
- To order exemption of SMEs from minimun wage law
- To slow down tariff liberalization
- To unveil master plan for power sector
- To crack down on big-time tax evaders
- To weed out corrupt officials
- To cut gov't red tape to "bare minimum"
- To fast-track infrastructure projects

ÉLAN

- That vision 'thing'
- Living in tropical-plantation style
- 'Dined, wined'

COLLANTES

Gloria means business; no Cha-cha chatter

"I ASK you to make your sacrifice. Take a gamble. I took the plunge and I'm glad of it," the President says on Friday during her speech at the Philippine Stock Exchange where she unveils economic measures to revive business activity. ERIK ARAZAS

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE PRESIDENT yesterday told the business community she meant business—by assuring business leaders that she was not interested in amending the Constitution.

"What we will not talk about is Charter change," President Macapagal-Arroyo declared, drawing applause from the businessmen and stock brokers who had gathered on the trading floor of the Philippine Stock Exchange in Makati City to witness the signing into law of two economic bills.

The two new laws—the landmark Special Purpose Vehicle Act and the Government Procurement Reform Act—are expected to stimulate economic activity.

"I don't want the people to misunderstand the reason for my decision not to run in 2004. The focus of discussion must therefore be exclusively the economy," she stressed.

GLORIA/ A4

Getting late for reforms

Civil society groups launch 12:30 Movement today

By John Nery

WHAT time is it? For some civil-society groups, the time is almost past the hour for successful reform.

When Edsa II forces launch the Dec. 30 Movement today, to "support and engage" President Macapagal-Arroyo's reform agenda in her remaining 18 months in office, some of the attention will settle on the movement's "nickname," which hints at the urgency of the task. The name "12:30" signifies that it is getting late in the day to mount an effective reform program, said Mario Taguiwalo, one of the organizers.

"Twelve-thirty means it's late *na* (already)!" Taguiwalo said.

Dan Songco, another organizer, said he was hopeful that the President's dramatic decision on Rizal Day last year, which the INQUIRER honored by naming her yesterday as the Filipino of the Year for 2002, would inspire more Filipinos to take an active part in public affairs.

"This is a democracy. We want to participate in her decisions," Songco said. Songco headed the secretariat of Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino II (Kompil II), which served as the clearinghouse for the dozens of civil-society groups which converged during the impeachment crisis in late 2000 and helped drive Joseph Estrada out of Malacañang in January 2001.

Taguiwalo said it was the movement's aim "to mobilize" a network of participation "as wide as possible." But the core of the movement consists of "the different groups involved in Edsa II—but not Bayan, PCA and Copa."

He was referring to the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, which is allied with the National Democratic Front; the People's Consultative Assembly, which is identified with its spokesperson Linda Montayre; and the Council on Philippine Affairs, which groups influential Tarlac politician Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, columnist Teodoro Benigno and organizer Pastor "Boy" Saycon, among others.

GETTING/ A4

A MOST cordial exchange between the President and Sen. Edgardo Angara fuels rumors that the latter is the Palace- anointed Senate president when the Senate resumes sessions on Monday. ERIK ARAZAS

Angara's Senate coup loses steam

By Rocky Nazareno and Carlito Pablo

BY accounts, the supposed attempt to unseat Senate President Franklin Drilon has sputtered and lost steam.

Even the alleged mastermind, opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara, said in an ambush interview: "There's no such thing, there's no such thing." He added that the reports on the alleged coup attempt in the Senate were only "in the media" and "not true."

And if heads were to be counted, Sen. John Osmeña categorically announced that he was "for Drilon."

"[Even if I am in the minority] I am an independent and I am not with the LDP," Osmena said, referring to the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Angara's party.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has also assured administration senators that the Senate presidency was not the prize for Angara's expressed support for her programs.

"She said there was no quid pro quo in the critical collaboration [promised by Angara]," Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda told INQUIRER editors Thursday night.

Legarda further quoted Ms Macapagal as saying that she would "not interfere in Senate politics."

Drilon himself considers the supposed attempt to take over the Senate leadership "a bluff and a non-event."

"It only succeeded in derailing the preparation for the passage of urgent measures that we had planned for the remainder of the President's term," he said yesterday at a press conference.

Drilon said he had consulted Legarda

ANGARA'S/ A13

House can't stop music for Cha-cha

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may profess indifference toward Charter change, but this will not stop the House of Representatives from pursuing it.

"No, I don't think so. I think the movement in the House cannot be stopped," Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez yesterday said in a phone interview.

Gonzalez said deliberations on House Resolution No. 16, which seeks to convene the two chambers of Congress into a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution and change the form of government, would begin when session resumes next week.

The resolution is the sole remaining major item in the agenda of the House, which has passed all Malacañang-certified measures now pending in the Senate.

"The President should leave [the matter to Congress] because it's not her call," Gonzalez said when asked to comment on her remarks at the Philippine Stock Exchange. "That prerogative is lodged by the Constitution on Congress. It is not a presidential prerogative."

In her speech, Ms Macapagal said she

CAN'T STOP/ A13

No talks yet for revised Piatco deal

By Rocky Nazareno and Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. Edgardo Angara may be talking cooperation with the Macapagal administration, but on the issue of the new international airport terminal, he is squarely on the side of the opposition.

He has said settlement of the disputed points in the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) contract and not a government takeover "is the best solution to the controversy." His position is directly counter to Malacañang's, which already found the contract onerous and therefore cannot be honored.

But the government's lawyers seem to be in no mood to listen. Exactly a month after the Supreme Court gave both the government and Piatco 30 days to consider mediation, the parties have not yet met.

Piatco vice president Moises Tolentino

NO TALKS/ A13

N. Korea pulls out of Nuke pact

SEOUL—North Korea withdrew from the global nuclear arms control treaty on Friday, escalating a crisis over its weapons ambitions just as two of its diplomats met Washington's former United Nations ambassador to try to end the impasse.

But Pyongyang said it had no intention of developing nuclear weapons and offered Washington a way out of the standoff by suggesting that it may reverse the decision to abandon the nuclear arms control treaty if Washington resumed vital fuel shipments to the Stalinist state, which is on the verge of economic collapse.

"If they (the Americans) resume the supply of fuel oil, we'll reconsider," said an official of the North Korean Embassy in China.

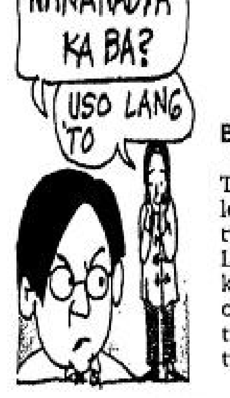
The official, a consul in charge of political affairs, said Washington's offer earlier this week to enter into a dialogue with Pyongyang to resolve the crisis was not good enough.

The reclusive communist state, which Washington has bracketed with Iraq and Iran in an "axis of evil," announced that it was pulling out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in a statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Accusing Washington of seeking to topple its political system, it also denounced the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as an American stooge and rejected the UN nuclear watchdog's call to readmit expelled inspectors.

"The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in a statement today de-

N. KOREA/ A4



Loren's fashion irks Ping

By Juliet L. Javellana

THOUGH they have been colleagues in the Senate for nearly two years, Majority Leader Loren Legarda said she "does not really know (Lacson) that well." Until one day, he came up to her with his trademark poker-face demanding to know: *"Bakit mo ba ako iniinis?*

LOREN'S/ A13

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/11/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Viña did 'dirty jobs,' says Berroya

By Abigail L. Ho and TJ Burgonio

ASIDE from being allegedly involved in the November 2000 kidnap-slay of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, slain Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña was also allegedly used by his superiors to carry out other "dirty jobs," according to a police official.

One of these was the alleged abduction and murder of two relatives of slain Red Scorpion Gang leader Alfredo "Joey" de Leon in 1992, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya of the Civil Security Group told reporters yesterday.

The kidnap-slay of De Leon's sister Magdalena Apostol and nièce Carmelita Intal was just one of a string of "dirty jobs" that Vina had allegedly carried out for a certain "mastermind that we all know," Berroya said.

Viña's killing in Tanza, Cavite, on Tuesday night has given rise to speculations that his murder could be connected with the Dacer-Corbito case.

Yesterday President Macapagal-Arroyo directed the Philippine National Police to take the lead role in the investigation of the Dacer-Corbito case.

"We received instructions that the PNP now concentrate on the Dacer-Corbito case effective today," Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. announced at a press briefing yesterday.

Ebdane had asked that the PNP be allowed to take over the case as it had more "holdings" (arrested persons) than the National Bureau of Investigation.

Shortly after the kidnapping of Dacer and Corbito, the case was transferred from the police to the NBI on the request of the victims' families.

The PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, headed by Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, would be handling the case as it was the unit that investigates heinous and syndicated crimes, said Ebdane.

Apostol and Intal were abducted in Makati in October 1992 by alleged operatives of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, which was then headed by police general-turned-Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

The two were taken to a motel for interrogation by six PAOCTF men who wanted them to reveal the whereabouts of De Leon, the leader of one of the most dreaded kidnapping syndicates in the 1990s.

The two women were allegedly subjected to water treatment and electric shock before being taken to a house in Victoria Valley in Antipolo.

They were strangled to death shortly before Christmas in 1992 and their bodies dumped in an irrigation canal.

Berroya said some witnesses had confirmed the alleged participation of Lacson and two of his men, Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, in the Apostol-Intal kidnap-slay.

One of the witnesses, a certain PO2 Ocampo of the PAOCTF, has gone missing.

The Dacer-Corbito case was another one of the jobs that Vina's "higher ups" had allegedly ordered him to do, so it was but logical that Viña would be working with the government in solving it, Berroya said.

Ebdane disclosed that Viña had been instrumental in getting some of the "Cavite group" of suspects in the Dacer-Corbito case to surrender.

He theorized that Viña may have done this because he wanted to "have an ace up his sleeve" in case he was charged and tried for the killing.

Berroya said that in 2001, he, then PNP chief Leandro Mendoza and Director General Rex Piad, the then chief of the PNP Directorial Staff, had tried to convince Viña to turn state witness in the Dacer-Corbito case.

Viña rejected the offer, telling the three generals that he would do so only if pushed against the wall.

Berroya said that during the meeting Viña "intimated" to them the alleged involvement of Lacson in the murder of Dacer and Corbito.

"We had actually convinced him to testify but he said he would only do so if he had nowhere left to go," Berroya said.

But though intelligence investigations had concluded that Mancao and Aquino were involved in the Dacer-Corbito kidnap-slay, no "legal links" were established to confirm Lacson's involvement, Berroya said.

"Everybody knows who the mastermind is but there's no legal link to this individual. Everybody knows why Dacer was killed," he said.

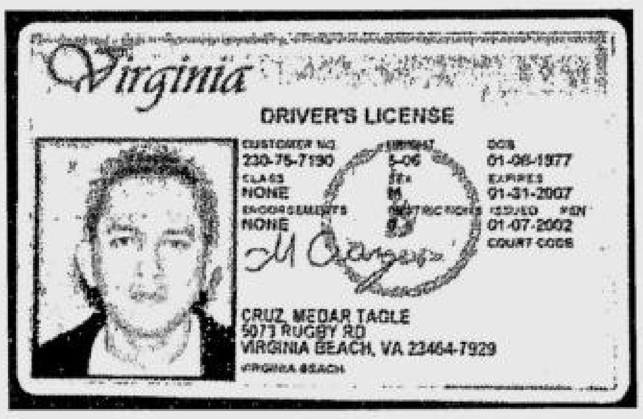
Though both the justice department and the National Bureau of Investigation were convinced of Viña's participation in the Dacer-Corbito kidnap-slay, Viña was never indicted in the double murder case in which 22 people, including several PAOTF members, were charged.

Despite Viña's killing, however, Berroya said witnesses in the Dacer-Corbito case were not going to back out.

"We're providing them double protection. We're calling on the courts to speed up the process so the witnesses will not feel like jail inmates," he said.

Ebdane said that apart from investigating the Dacer-Corbito case so the police officers and civilians charged with double murder could be prosecuted, the police would also try to coax the other suspects to turn state witness.

"We need more witnesses and we need to gather more evidence," he said.



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'Not psychotic but capable of aggression'

By Philip Tubeza

CAPABLE of aggression but not psychotic.

This was how a National Bureau of Investigation psychiatrist described the alleged assailant of slain police official Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña in a report that he made after subjecting suspect Medar T. Cruz to a battery of tests.

"The subject has been found to be non-psychotic. However, his personality profile depicts an individual who is capable of acting out aggression based on a low level of maturity and poor impulsive control," psychiatrist Romel T. Papa wrote in his report.

Papa said he conducted a mental status examination and a psychological test on Cruz after interviewing him and observing his behavior.

"His mental faculties are functioning normally. They did not see any psychotic tendencies in him," said NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco.

The NBI has asked the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States for more background information on Cruz, who is a US resident, particularly if he has a criminal record.

The NBI is also interested to know the identity of the two police officers who joined Viñas when they visited Eustacio Cruz, the suspect's father, in Virginia in the US in 2000 or 2001.

The slain officer was allegedly introduced to the younger Cruz during that visit.

Wycoco also said the NBI was looking for another *balikbayan*, former Cavite policeman Renato Joshue Arenas, reportedly a godfather of the younger Cruz who was reportedly an eyewitness to the killing.

The NBI would consider Arenas a suspect in the killing if he continues to hide from investigators, he said.

Arenas was reportedly sitting beside the older Cruz when Viña was shot dead in Barangay Santol, Tanza, Cavite, Tuesday. After the killing, Arenas fled and is nowhere to be found.

The Cavite police has requested the immigration bureau to place Arenas on its hold departure list to stop him from fleeing abroad.

"Why did he suddenly disappear? All the guests at the table have been accounted for except for him. If he is not involved, why is he hiding?" Wycoco said.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, the Cavite provincial police director, said Arenas who was facing a homicide case in a local court, may have gone into hiding for fear that he would be arrested for the homicide case and would be prevented from returning to the US.

But Arenas had been sending some surrender feelers, Rosales said.

Arenas reportedly arrived from the US on Dec. 30, three days after Medar Cruz flew in, also from the US.

Wycoco meanwhile defended the NBI's inquiry into whether Viña's death had any connection with the murder of Chief Supt. John Campos last month and the attempts on the life of Mary "Rosebud" Ong in October and November.

"Of course as investigators, it's our duty to find out if these are all connected," Wycoco said.

"If you study the probability (of these incidents happening successively), the chances that these would happen is one in two trillion," he said.

Probers say pilot error caused LaoagAir crash

By Abigail L. Ho

GOVERNMENT investigators have concluded that human error caused the crash of a Laoag International Airlines plane in Manila Bay last November which killed 19 people.

Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza said yesterday the immediate cause of the crash was "engine failure as a result of fuel starvation."

"The pilots failed to notice that the fuel shut-off switches were at the shut position," Mendoza said.

Mendoza assailed officers of the ill-fated plane's carrier, the Laoag International Airlines, for failing to maintain the kind of discipline "required by the aviation industry."

"In view of these developments, I ordered the continued suspension of the Laoag International Air operations," Mendoza said.

Beyond this, Mendoza added, the air tragedy has prompted the DOTC to correct "administrative lapses" in the department's regulatory bodies, Air Transportation Office and Civil Aeronautics Board. Heads are expected to roll.

"Digging deeper into the accident, however, showed that there are countless other seemingly unrelated conditions, which if not addressed and corrected, will eventually lead to accidents of this nature," he noted.

Thrity-four people were aboard LaoagAir's twin-engine Fokker 27 bound for Laoag City when it crashed shortly after takeoff from the Manila Domestic Airport on Nov. 11, 2002. Nineteen people were killed while 15 were rescued.

Singapore report tags MILF a threat to island's security

SINGAPORE—Singapore has singled out the Moro Islamic Liberation Front as a threat to its security and vowed to intensify efforts to root out its sympathizers, a government report that went on sale Friday said.

Singapore's terrorism report puts the MILF in the same league with Jemaah Islamiyah, the al-Qaida linked group suspected of masterminding the Bali bombings that killed over 190 people in October.

"The MILF has, in its own right, attracted security concerns in Singapore," the report said.

"Any Singaporean who offers direct or active assistance to an organization like the MILF, which engages in terrorist violence is a subject of security concern," it said.

The 12,000-strong MILF has been fighting for Muslim self-rule in the southern Philippines for the last three decades. The MILF and the government signed a shaky ceasefire in 1997 but both sides have accused each other of violating it. Both sides reported renewed fighting this week.

Philippine officials say al-Qaida provided MILF with weapons and training in the past, but the MILF has repeatedly denied it is involved in terrorism.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said Friday the MILF "does not discount the possibility" that some of its members have links to Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaida. "We welcome an investigation because we ourselves want to know," he said.

Kabalu expressed disbelief the MILF was seen a threat to Singapore.

"The only new thing there is we are a threat to the security of Singapore. My god! How come?" he said.

The Singaporean report said Jemaah Islamiyah established a training camp at the MILF's headquarters at Camp Abubakar in 1997.

At least four of the suspected terrorists in Singapore's custody are believed to have received weapons training at the camp, it said.

Expert bombmaker and key Jemaah Islamiyah leader, Fathur Rahman Al-Ghozi, who operated under the alias "Mike," acted as a liaison with the MILF, the report said.

Singapore has arrested 31 Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists since December 2001 when it uncovered a plot to level the US, Australian and British embassies and other targets in the city-state.

The government said al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiyah operative Riduan Isamuddin, also known as Hambali, assisted the MILF by ordering the bombings of Philippine targets in Indonesia in 2000. *AP*

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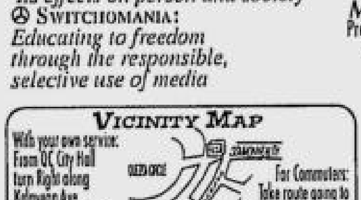

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AFP to Reds: Prove sincerity on peace talks, stop attacks

By Martin P. Marfil

COMMUNIST rebels should cease attacks on economic targets to prove their sincerity in calling for resumption of stalled peace talks, the military said yesterday.

New People's Army guerrillas had said this week they were ready to resume peace talks with the government after an 18-month break.

"Their actions speak louder than their words," Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion said in a statement.

"If it is real peace they are after, one very good confidence-building measure they can show to prove their sincerity in their quest for peace is to declare a stop to all the armed attacks on civilian targets such as telecommunications sites and public transport facilities," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo suspended negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines in mid-2001 after its armed wing, the NPA, assassinated two legislators.

NPA spokesperson Gregorio Rosal said in a statement on Tuesday that the rebels "remain hopeful" that Ms Macapagal, who has said she would not contest the May 2004 presidential election, would resume negotiations "before her regime ends."

The 9,000-member NPA has been waging a 33-year Maoist guerrilla campaign.

The rebels stepped up attacks of isolated military and police posts as well as far-flung telecommunications and power facilities following the suspension of peace talks.

In that time, the government has succeeded in having some European countries declare the CPP a "terrorist group."

Purificacion also took a swipe at CPP founding chair Jose Ma. Sison for allegedly engaging in "double talk" when he declared the peace talks "dead" and rejected suggestions that he join the administration's proposed government of national unity.

"It is obvious that the initial call of Mr. Sison to resume the peace talks was in response to a survey . . . which showed that the majority of Filipinos did not trust the communists but still wanted peace to continue. Sison wanted to project the (communists) as still wanting peace," Purificacion said.

"However, with all this talk of a unity government which Sison obviously does not like, considering that he will have to share power instead of having it all to himself, he has now branded any talks of peace as dead," the military spokesperson said.

Sison had described the peace talks as "dead" because of the alleged "arrogance" of the Macapagal administration.

He also said that there had been no attempt to contact the National Democratic Front, the CPP's political arm, regarding the proposed unity government.

The Cabinet oversight committee on internal security has set out four conditions for participation in a government of national unity—adherence to the Constitution, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rule of law.

This effectively ruled out the participation of the communists in any government of national unity.

At least one provincial council in Mindanao has urged the government and the communists to go back to the negotiating table.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of South Cotabato in a resolution which it passed recently said the total development and liberation of the Filipino people cannot be attained without genuine and lasting peace. *With a report from Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Palace pursues talks with MILF, NDF

WHILE moving to spur reforms in the economy and the bureaucracy, Malacañang is also accelerating the peace process with the two main insurgencies.

Silvestre Bello III, the government's chief negotiator with the communist National Democratic Front, said fresh initiatives would be infused into the stalled peace talks with the communist rebels in the next few weeks.

With the other rebel front, the Muslim secessionists in the south, Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said "something concrete might happen during the next six months" in the negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In a phone interview, Bello said the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security is expected to wrap up its review of the draft of a proposed final peace agreement with communist rebels by the end of this month.

"Once the draft is finalized, we'll be presenting the document to our counterparts in the NDF," Bello said.

The Bello panel has submitted a draft agreement which the Cabinet oversight committee has been reviewing "line by line" for the past few weeks.

In an interview with Palace reporters, Bunye said the acceleration of talks with the MILF had been mentioned during a party caucus last Wednesday of the leaders of the ruling Lakas-CMD party.

The government and MILF signed a ceasefire in 2001 to pave the way for peace talks, but sporadic clashes between the military and MILF guerrillas in remote areas have persisted.

Bunye also said that membership in the advisory Council of State would also be open to rebel groups as long as they adhere to basic principles, that is, adherence to the Constitution, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines, and the rule of law.

"For as long as you adhere to certain principles, then you could be part of the council," Bunye said.

The Lakas-CMD's Wednesday meeting, chaired by President Macapagal-Arroyo, approved the formation of a Council of State to serve as an advisory body to the President.

This council is supposed to be the expression of the administration's vision of a "government of national unity," a term which Ms Macapagal yesterday revised to "government of national cooperation." *Carlito Pablo*

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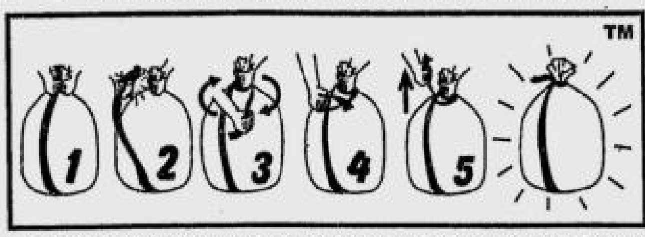

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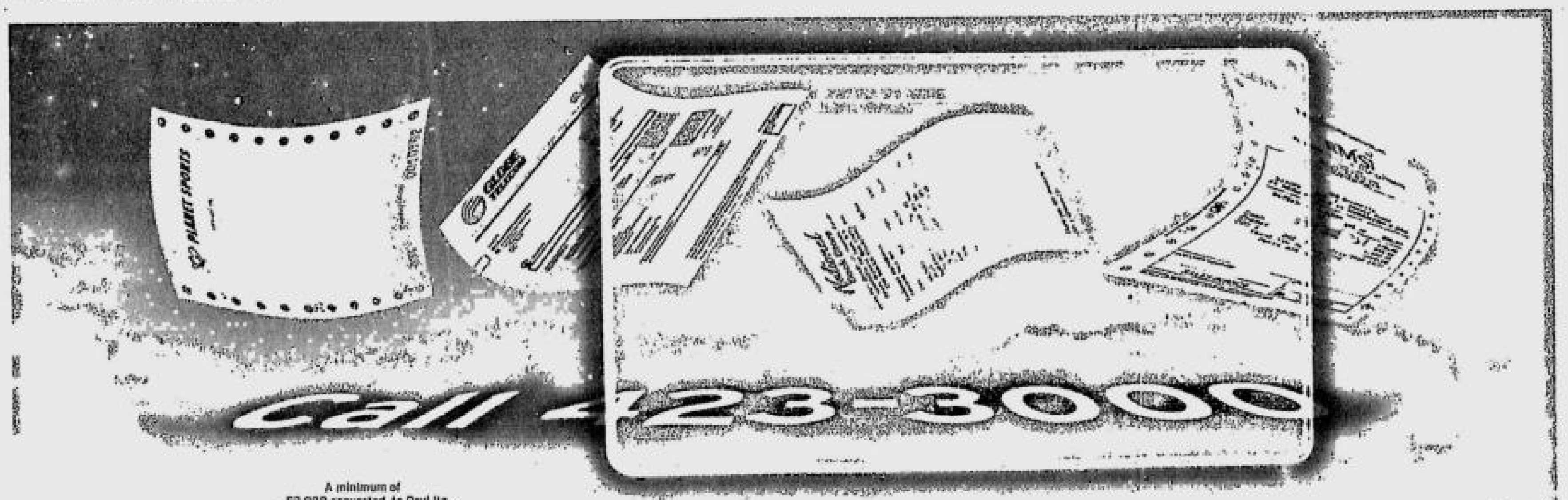

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TO SIGNAL the start of trading, President Macapagal rings the bell at the Philippine Stock Exchange Friday after signing two landmark bills to fuel economic growth. From left, Robert Coyiuto Jr., PSE Chair Vivian Yuchengco, Sen. Franklin Drilon, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

ERIK ARAZAS

Policy shift is from politics to economy

By Volt Contreras

THE REACTION to the President's economic policy speech—the first since she announced she would not run in the 2004 elections—closely followed the ideological divide.

Guillermo Luz, the executive director of the Makati Business Club, lauded the President's remarks. "The shift in focus to economy from politics is important," Luz said.

"It's not fair to ask 'Can the President do it?' What should be asked is 'Can the country do it?' This is a collective effort," Luz said. The Makati Business Club groups some 400 of the country's biggest companies.

But militant groups were thoroughly unimpressed.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Sanlakas doubted whether the reforms the President announced would impact on the immediate problems of the poor like soaring power and water rates.

Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza noted that Ms Macapagal had merely repeated her earlier vows to go against tax evaders and corrupt government officials.

Most of her policy statements "merely addressed the concerns of business, such as the (Special Purpose Asset Vehicle) bill and a review of tariff policies," he added.

"The President has practically kept the status quo by keeping the purchased power adjustment and pursuing the privatization of the power industry," observed Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes.

Her speech advanced the "same policy that she carried since Day One (of her term) that had isolated her from the masses," Reyes added.

Fortaleza said Sanlakas had been challenging the President to make a "major policy change… as a way of proving (the) sincerity" of her decision to drop her reelection bid and free herself from political compromises.

The group has reduced its challenges for Ms Macapagal to four: The abolition of the PPA and suspension of water rate increases; the suspension of the "zero-tariff regime" for imports; the use of the national budget for more social services rather than for debt payments; and the withdrawal of Philippine support to Washington's "wars of aggression" against Iraq and other countries.

These demands are "doable" even in the last 18 months of Ms Macapagal's term, Fortaleza said.

The reaction from analysts abroad was mixed.

Adam Le Mesurier, a regional economist with Goldman Sachs in Singapore, said the President's intentions were positive but the markets wanted her to deliver by overcoming institutional barriers.

As a practical example, he suggested that Ms Macapagal should follow up an International Monetary Fund recommendation that the tax agency be restructured, starting with a personnel overhaul.

"She's laid out a new agenda—as she laid out an old agenda—and it's going to be an issue of execution," Le Mesurier said.

David Cohen, regional director of macroeconomic analysis at MMS International, said building road and railway networks was fine but question marks about financing still hung over the policy.

"The infrastructure projects would potentially be helpful to economic growth but the market would be focused intently on how the government would raise revenues for such projects," he said.

"There is no magic wand that she could wave to bring down the budget deficit overnight. That clearly is the primary concern in the market."

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters the new SPAV law could help reduce the non-performing assets of the banking system by as much as P200 billion.

He said he hoped asset transfers would take place within six months of the expected implementation of the law in April.

The central bank said the banking system's non-performing loan (NPL) ratio stood at 16.36 percent at the end of October.

Gene Gabriel of ATR-Kim Eng Securities Inc. said the Philippines had lagged behind its Southeast Asian neighbors in efforts to deal with banks' bad loans after the Asian crisis. As a result it has one of the highest NPL ratios in the region, he added.

Foreign funds wanting to buy up the non-performing assets are already in place, Gabriel said.

"They are conducting their due diligence. They have already identified which assets they want to buy." Local banks also had an idea of what assets they wanted to sell and the price they expected, he added. *With reports from Reuters, AFP*

Getting late for reforms

From page A1

Bayan has supported the Macapagal administration's prosecution of Estrada, but is critical on other issues. Copa underwent a much-publicized falling out with the President, with Ms Macapagal at one point calling Saycon a "termite" eating away at the country's foundation. The PCA has since joined the administration's critics in opposing the President on almost every issue.

Taguiwalo said "a number of groups involved in the peace process" were also joining the movement. Organizers expect more than a hundred civil-society leaders to show up at today's organizing assembly, which will be held at the Institute of Social Order, located inside the Loyola Heights campus of the Ateneo de Manila University. The Kompil II assembly in 2000 which helped give direction to the oust-Estrada movement was held in the same campus.

The Dec. 30 assembly, Songco said, will "discuss GMA's program for the next 18 months, prepare action plans and (the) structure of the movement."

Moral mandate?

Many of the organizers declined to discuss the President's unprecedented Rizal Day decision in moral terms, studiously avoiding such phrases as "the moral high ground" or "moral mandate"—the buzzwords that descended on Malacañang after Ms Macapagal assumed office almost two years ago.

Taguiwalo, for instance, said he preferred to say only that "the President has reclaimed her ability to lead the nation."

Other civil-society representatives gave the same impression: that is to say, that given the lateness of the hour, they were inclined to place the emphasis on what can be done, rather than on the intractable issue of motives or the distracting question of presidential "sincerity."

"What the President has done is give the country breathing space," Taguiwalo said, pointing to Ms Macapagal's declaration that political considerations won't be a factor in her reform agenda.

Ms Macapagal is the first president under the 1987 Constitution to renounce her right to run for election. "We recognize that this sacrifice of her ambition gave weight and credibility to the three-part agenda she outlined," Taguiwalo said. "So we are responding in kind."

"We pledge to participate vigorously in specific actions in these (three) areas, and to build as wide a (base of) support as possible," he added.

3-part reform agenda

He was referring to the President's three-part reform agenda to which she said she "would devote the last year and a half of (her) administration to: strengthening the economy, creating more jobs and encouraging business activity that is unhampered by corruption and red tape in government; healing the deep divisions within society; (and) working for clean and honest elections in 2004."

The 12:30 movement will circulate a "pledge" which they will ask all those who support the reform agenda to sign. The phrasing will be necessarily broad, but at the same time it will include concrete proposals that will prove to be a hurdle for some administration allies, including congressmen who are agitating for Charter change.

"We will be specific in opposing constituent assembly, because it risks increasing the possibility of political conflict," Taguiwalo, who helped draft the pledge, said.

But a leading member of Kompil II said his group was taking a wait-and-see attitude to the 12:30 movement.

Teddy Lopez, secretary general of the newly launched Bagong Bandila, said his group was generally "supportive" of both the President's decision and the objectives of the movement.

"But we want to know more," Lopez said. Bagong Bandila is a movement consisting of the various organizations that were part of Bandila, the anti-Marcos, Edsa I political coalition.

Lopez gives an example: "What do we do about (the administration's) unqualified support for an American invasion (of Iraq)?"

His benchmark is not a surprise, because Bagong Bandila's council of advisers is chaired by Vice President Teofisto Guingona, a nationalist advocate who parted ways with Ms Macapagal because of "policy differences" regarding the conduct of RP-US joint military training exercises.

Lopez said another non-negotiable was the status of the historic trial where Estrada is accused of plunder.

The administration must "prosecute vigorously the Erap case," mindful that talk from both administration and opposition officials about reconciliation and healing may be misinterpreted as going soft on Estrada.

"We are supportive of efforts of civil society to engage" the President's reform agenda, Lopez emphasized. But Ms Macapagal must spell out the details.

Gloria means business; no Cha-cha chatter

From page A1

The market appeared buoyed by Ms Macapagal's package of reforms—she had also announced additional measures—and shares closed sharply higher. The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 2.2 percent, at 1058.30, its best close in nearly two months.

The SPAV law, which frees the country's banks of bad loans, will enable the banking sector to convert idle assets into cash to release badly needed funds.

"The SPAV seeks to save the banking sector from the financial fallout of lending decisions that went sour after the Asian crisis (of 1997-98)," the President said, adding that the banks have been groaning under more than P300 billion in bad loans and P200 billion in repossessed assets.

"The SPAV law takes away these burdens—for a price of course," she said. The banks will charge their losses against their taxes, she said.

"The SPAV should bring in new money to revive bad loans, find new uses for foreclosed assets, rehabilitate failed businesses and open wide the lending windows again," she said.

Many foreign and local banks have said they are ready to sign agreements with asset-management companies (AMCs) which will acquire these assets.

The new procurement law aims to eliminate corruption in state procurement contracts, the hiring of consultants and the award of infrastructure projects, which drain an estimated P22 billion from public coffers every year.

"As a bonus, the money that can be saved by making more procurement more effective, efficient and less prone to corrupt practices will reduce the budget deficit," Ms Macapagal said.

She promised the government will wage "an unrelenting war" against business fraud and official extortion. "If anyone in my government tries it, tell me," she said.

Other reforms

Aside from the two laws, Ms Macapagal said she was ready to implement other crucial reforms, such as a "master plan for the power sector," which she promised would end power outages in the central regions and prevent power outages elsewhere.

She also said that key bills would be enacted soon to eliminate the growing budget deficit and return the country's "fiscal balance." This includes the privatization of state-owned power transmission assets and the indexing of so-called "sin taxes" to inflation, which should raise an additional P40 billion annually.

She also called for the passage of laws to "rationalize" motor vehicle taxes and to transform the tax-collecting Bureau of Internal Revenue into a corporate entity.

The conversion of the graft-ridden agency is expected to attract new talent and revitalize the unit.

The President also said she had signed orders exempting small enterprises from a minimum wage law and was working on a law allowing agricultural land to be used as collateral without violating agrarian reform legislation.

In an attack on what she called "unfair trade," Ms Macapagal said she was adopting "tariff policy signals" that would slow down tariff liberalization to the very minimum of that required by the World Trade Organization and Asean Free Trade Area (Afta).

This would include taking "full advantage for all exemption windows allowed," particularly for the country's petrochemical industry, she said.

She remarked that "unbridled globalization is no longer in vogue." She also said she would soon create a "Natural Resources Mining Development Corporation," to develop "dormant and high potential mining areas that we can list in the Philippine Stock Exchange."

Trading day

Speaking before the start of trading, Ms Macapagal vowed to reduce government red tape to the "bare minimum," adopt a protectionist tariff policy, crack down on big-time tax evaders and smugglers, fast-track major infrastructure projects and weed out corrupt public officials.

She also called on Congress to do its share by passing several economic bills, such as the Transco franchise and the Securitization Act.

She said she would meet on Jan. 14 with the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) and the chairs of the pertinent Senate and House committees to discuss these bills.

Taking his cue, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday lobbied Congress to enact at the soonest time four economic measures that would help the government collect more taxes and bring the economy to speed.

"I hope Congress would cooperate and act on the pending economic bills swiftly in response to the calls of the President for unity to move the Philippine economy forward," said Camacho.

Immediately after Ms Macapagal delivered her speech at the stock exchange, Camacho met with Rep. Jules Ledesma, chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, to discuss how the economic legislative agenda could move faster.

Last Monday, the finance chief met with Senator Ralph Recto, who chairs the Ways and Means Committee at the Senate, to similarly lobby for the passage of key legislative measures.

The four bills that the Macapagal administration want passed is the indexation of excise taxes on beer and tobacco, restructuring of taxes for automobiles, the proposed Securitization Act and the transformation of the Bureau of Internal Revenue into an autonomous National Authority for Revenue Administration.

Making sacrifices

The President assured the business community that her government was "making the sacrifices, doing everything to get this country going forward."

"I ask you to make your sacrifice. Take a gamble. I took the plunge and I'm glad of it," she said. "Stay with me. I have no motive to lead you or the people astray. Join me. The trip will be short but I think rewarding for all of us who love our country."

But Ms Macapagal, who has earned praise from businessmen for forgoing a run in the 2004 elections, got the loudest applause when she announced that PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco and former PSE chair Robert Coyiuto had withdrawn their candidacies in the PSE elections this March.

Their fierce rivalry last year nearly disrupted trading.

Yuchengco, who was on stage with the President, smiled and even joined in the applause. Coyiuto later came up to the President.

Afterwards, as the President waited on stage with Yuchengco, Coyiuto and other PSE officials for the start of trading at 9:30 a.m., stockbrokers egged the two rivals to kiss and make up.

But the two just smiled at each other.

At exactly 9:30 a.m. the President sounded the bell to start the day's trading.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, House Speaker Jose De Venecia, some senators and congressmen witnessed the signing.

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara, who is rumored to be going after Drilon's post, was also there. He shook hands with the President but did not talk to Drilon. *With reports from Clarissa Batino; AP, Reuters, AFP*

N. Korea …

From page A1

clared its withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its total freedom from the binding force of the safeguards accord with the International Atomic Energy Agency," KCNA said.

The unprecedented action sparked swift condemnation and alarm around the world. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi demanded an immediate retraction and said he would raise the matter during an ongoing visit to Russia.

Moscow, one of North Korea's few remaining friends, voiced alarm. Australia said it would send a senior delegation to Pyongyang next week to try to break the nuclear impasse and France said it was time for the UN Security Council to act.

The yen fell to a three-and-a-half-year low against the euro. South Korean and Japanese stocks fell on the news and the won slipped against the US dollar.

"Though we pull out of the NPT, we have no intention to produce nuclear weapons and our nuclear activities at this stage will be confined only to peaceful purposes such as the production of electricity," the North's statement said.

"If the US drops its hostile policy to stifle the DPRK and stops its nuclear threat to the DPRK, the DPRK may prove through a separate verification between the DPRK and the US that it does not make any nuclear weapon," it added.

South Korea called its National Security Council into session on Friday to discuss Pyongyang's latest move.

"We think it's very regrettable," a spokesperson for South Korean president-elect Roh Moo-hyun said.

In New Mexico, former UN Ambassador Bill Richardson—now the state's governor—held two hours of talks with the two New York-based North Koreans late on Thursday.

"The talks were cordial and candid," Richardson spokesperson Billy Sparks told reporters in Santa Fe, New Mexico, adding that a second three-hour session was scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. (11 a.m. EST/1600 GMT) yesterday.

The two Koreas remain technically at war because the truce that ended their 1950-53 conflict never led to a peace treaty.

Friday's announcement followed an ultimatum from the Vienna-based IAEA on Monday calling on North Korea to readmit the nuclear inspectors it expelled last month after announcing that it was restarting its plutonium reactor to produce electricity.

Some analysts have said impoverished North Korea is stepping up the angry rhetoric to win concessions from the West.

"North Korea always lays out the most hysterical rhetoric and stakes out the highest position just before they make a deal," said Brad Glosserman, of the Honolulu-based think tank, Pacific Forum CSIS.

Pyongyang threatened to pull out of the NPT before, during a 1993-94 nuclear crisis on the peninsula when it stepped back from the brink just one day before its three-month notice took effect.

Richardson, a Democrat, has a history of negotiation with the North Koreans that includes brokering the 1994 release of a US soldier whose helicopter crashed in North Korea and the freeing in 1996 of a young US citizen held on spy charges. *Reuters, AFP*

'Very, very tight security' for US soldiers in Zambo

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Abu Sayyaf remains the number one threat to the security of at least 200 American soldiers who are expected to start arriving here next week to train Filipino soldiers hunt down terror groups.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, however, said there was no real threat from the bandit group "except for empty threats relayed to the media."

Despite the absence of real threats, Abaya said the military was implementing stricter security measures for the US forces.

"(We want to) ensure their safety during their stay and while the training is being conducted," Abaya said.

He said the areas where the Americans would be deployed would be under "very, very tight security," adding that Filipinos who interact with the US troops would be tightly screened.

Abaya said between 200 and 300 American soldiers will arrive in this southern port to be deployed in two military camps here to train local soldiers to make up a light reaction company and a light infantry battalion.

He said the rest of the exercises, including the night flying training for helicopter pilots, would be held in Fort Magsaysay in Luzon and in Cebu City.

Abaya said the US troops would stay away from the nearby islands of Basilan and Jolo, where Filipino soldiers are hunting down the Abu Sayyaf, a local Muslim rebel group allegedly linked to the al-Qaida network of Islamic militants which has hit American targets.

On Oct. 2, 2002, a powerful bomb blamed on the bandit group exploded in front of the gates of Camp Enrile in Barangay Malagutay here. The blast killed Sgt. 1st Class Mark Jackson and wounded another American soldier. Jackson was here as part of the Balikatan 02-01. *With AFP report*

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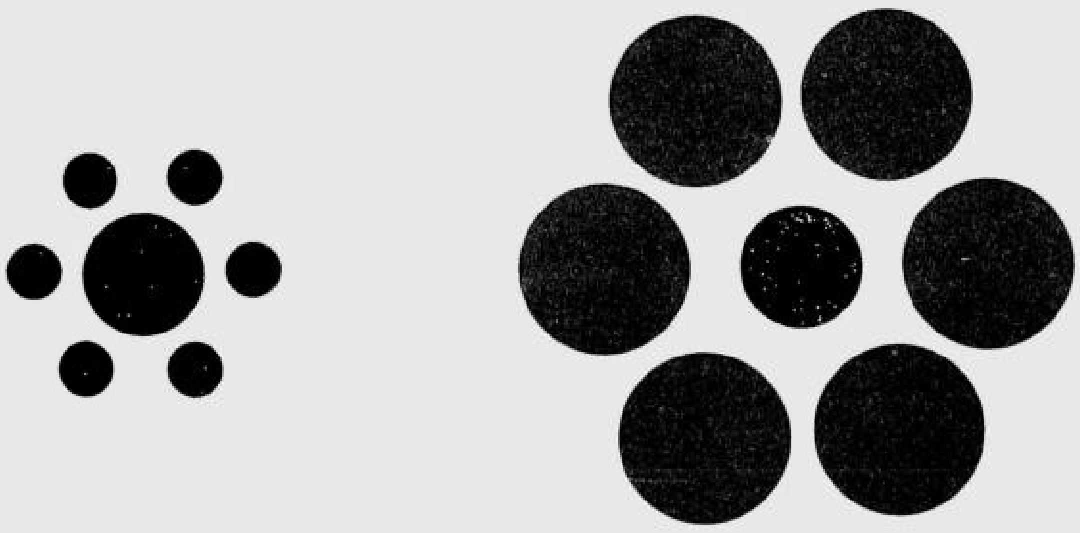

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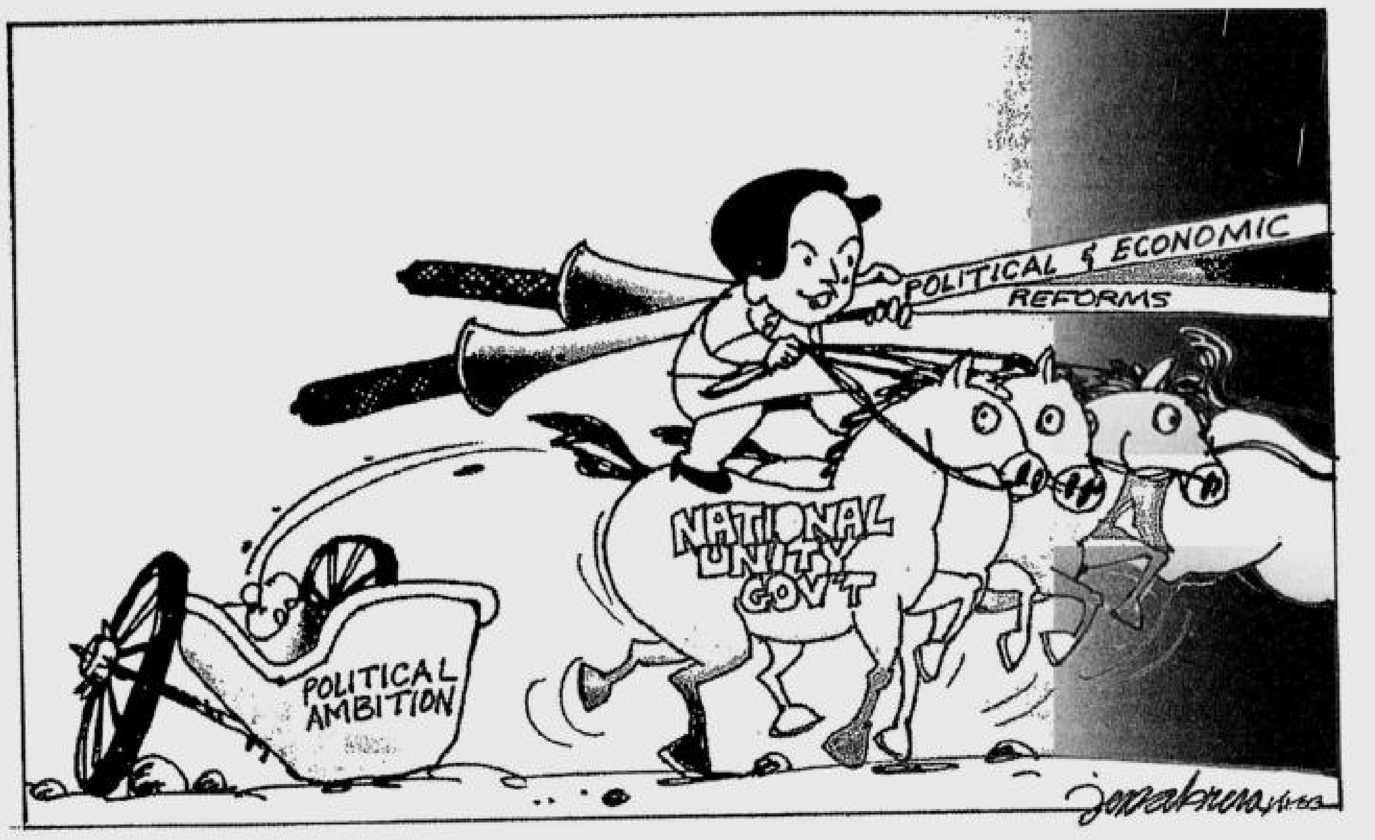

US can't do it alone

EDITORIAL

THE BUSH administration's efforts to drag the world into an early war against Iraq is encountering increasing resistance from even among the United States' own allies.

After six weeks, United Nations weapons inspectors combing Iraq for evidence that it has produced and stores weapons of mass destruction, together with the capacity to deliver them, have declared that they have so far not found the "smoking gun" that would justify military action against Iraq for breach of the UN Security Council resolution ordering Iraq to dismantle such weapons.

The inspection team is due to submit an interim report to the Security Council on Jan. 27, but this early it is already asking for more time to do the job. The inspectors believe that Iraq is not giving them full cooperation. While Britain, the closest US ally, has criticized Baghdad for not being "pro-active" in cooperating with the inspectors, the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair is reported by the London Daily Telegraph to have urged the United States to delay the war until autumn, to give the inspectors more time to provide evidence of arms violations by Baghdad.

Blair reportedly faces a rebellion by at least 100 Labor members of parliament if war is waged against Iraq without UN backing. Most British ministers and senior officials are said to be of the opinion that there is no clear legal case for military action against Iraq. Senior diplomats have told their government that there was a good chance of securing UN approval for military action in autumn if Saddam could be shown unambiguously to be defying the disarmament conditions of the UN resolution.

Washington has been trying to build up public support for war by showing impatience over the inability of the inspectors to find evidence of weapons and their delivery systems. US President Bush escalated the war rhetoric by accusing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein last week of showing "contempt" for the UN and its resolution. Saddam didn't ease tensions by accusing UN inspectors of spying on Iraq "instead of searching for weapons of mass destruction."

There is, however, a growing consensus among US allies to give the inspectors more time to secure evidence. Their reluctance to be dragged into war without UN backing has shifted the issue toward the need for enabling UN resolution allowing military action. It also appears to have slowed the tempo of the US war hysteria and to have forced Washington to consider accepting a new Security Council resolution that would authorize military action rather than leave entirely to the United States the decision on whether Saddam has breached the UN resolution and when to attack Iraq.

Britain and France, which are permanent members of the Security Council, prefer a specific enabling resolution. Germany, which has been critical of Bush's warlike stance, favors giving more time to the UN inspectors.

These developments have spoiled US plans of attacking Iraq in February, which US military planners consider as the most suitable time to invade because of the mild season. If the attack were delayed, military action would be hampered by the heat, they have argued. But the British point out that autumn would be as good a time to make war.

The United States and Britain have been building up deployment of military forces near Iraq, apparently to intensify pressure to cooperate with UN inspectors and encourage anti-Saddam forces inside Iraq to topple him from power. But these plans are getting unstuck as Saddam shows increasing irritation over the UN inspections and vows never to step down.

Among the allies, there is disagreement over the objective of military action. Washington insists that ousting Saddam and regime change are the key objectives, while the British and Europeans believe that the main objective is disarmament.

The United States can attack Iraq without another UN resolution only at the risk of inviting international isolation. There's little doubt that it has the military might and resources to devastate Iraq in a matter of weeks, but what happens next poses greater problems than a military victory. Such a unilateral action will have no international legitimacy.

Whether the question is taking military action or rebuilding Iraq and installing a democratic government in a society that has only a glancing acquaintance with democracy, the United States cannot do it alone.

Cheapening the Senate

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I READ with much interest Conrad de Quiros' column the other Friday where he said there oughta be a law against public officers doing sidelines, like senators making commercials and local officials retaining their former jobs as television bozos and movie stars.

I fully agree with him; in fact, I myself have criticized the practice several times in this column although not as doggedly as he has. I am glad it is being challenged in court, with Interior Secretary Joey Lina among the respondents. He is faulted for not implementing the provision in the Local Government Code prohibiting local elective officials, as full-time functionaries, from engaging in private occupational activities.

I hope the case will not be dismissed on the ground that the petitioners are not "proper parties." This is the usual and convenient pretext of judges, not excluding the justices of the Supreme Court, who want to lighten their work even if the issues raised demand judicial attention and resolution.

That is what happened in the case of Guanzon v. De Villa, involving the validity of the notorious *zona*, a hangover from the Japanese occupation. When the "areal saturation drive," as it is now euphemistically sanitized, was repeated in several depressed communities in 1990, it was challenged by the leaders of the affected areas. The Supreme Court held that they were not proper parties, not being among those directly subjected to the *zona*. Through this obvious brush-off, the validity of the *zona*—an important constitutional issue—was effectively evaded.

The extra-curricular activities of public officials remind me of an interview I watched some years ago of the actor Rod Taylor, who had just joined MGM and was talking of his experiences in his new company. He said he was particularly impressed when he saw four of the big studio stars at a party, all of them spic and span and obviously having a great time with each other.

I supposed there would be a picture somewhere of that group and hoped to come across it some day. I never did until one afternoon when, while waiting for my wife Sally getting her hair trimmed at a beauty salon, I chanced upon that long-sought photo. I found it in a tattered issue of one of the magazines offered by the parlor to entertain waiting customers or husbands waiting for their wives.

There it was at last! It was in black and white and showed Clark Gable, Van Heflin, Gary Cooper and James Stewart gathered at what was probably a swank affair. One of them apparently had made a light remark or told a joke that everyone appreciated with a handsome smile. I particularly noted that all of them were formally attired—dark suits and white shirts and ties—and everyone was neatly combed.

That picture presented a sharp contrast to the appearance of many modern-day Hollywood stars, who look crumpled instead of neat and respectable. The style today is to *intentionally* appear untidy, probably to convey some gift of character that I for one am unable to discover. Among its followers are Brad Pitt, Al Pacino and Robert de Niro, to mention only a few. They are styling what is now called "the just-awakened look," which is supposed to make them more attractive.

Fortunately, the stars of my generation have not followed suit and are sticking to their respectable appearance. Their hair may have thinned or grayed, but Paul Newman and Gregory Peck and Charlton Heston still look as neat as they did during their prime decades ago.

To go back to Conrad's peeve, and mine, I cannot understand the motivation of the public officials who, despite the important positions they occupy, have seen fit to degrade them, and themselves too, by appearing in television commercials as ordinary hucksters selling their own names for valuable honoraria. In a sense, they are messing their hair like the present-day actors instead of looking dignified and respectable as befits their official status.

It's bad enough that Mayor Joey Marquez spends part of his official time clowning on TV while the garbage piles up in Parañaque City. What is more deplorable is that like him and some other local elective officials who do not place much importance on their positions, even the senators have lost their sense of values. Some of them have seen fit to appear in television commercials like ordinary members of the advertising industry whose sole objective is to peddle products for others, and for a price.

Senators are, deservedly or not, members of the Congress of the Philippines, which plays a responsible part in the scheme of the Republic. The Senate before prided itself in the many outstanding statesmen who lent it prestige, but that past has been dishonored by the present pretenders in that once-august chamber. Now it is disgraced by legislators *cum* hawkers endorsing detergents and medicines and beer for handsome if filthy fees while also prematurely campaigning for 2004.

Conrad says there oughta be a law against these practices that have cheapened public office with private pettiness and greed, let alone bad taste. There *is* a law calling for self-respect, but it does not bind those who do not respect themselves.

The Most Frustrated Filipino

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

JUST thinking out loud. We read about people who are recognized as being Most Outstanding, or Most Valuable, or Most Successful in practically every area or category or activity. So, given the frustration levels that everybody seems to experience around here, who would qualify as the Most Frustrated Filipino?

It would not be too farfetched to expect most of the population to declare themselves candidates for the title. And they probably will have some fascinating stories to tell, guaranteed to bring their listeners to a state of teeth-gnashing and hair-tearing. But barring self nominations, and supposing that either SWS or Pulse Asia included in one of its periodic surveys a question on who should receive that title, who do you think would be some of the most likely winners?

Being very visible, President Macapagal-Arroyo would probably figure prominently in the race. If citations were given, hers would most likely read, "Damned if she does, damned if she doesn't," what with almost everyone suspecting her motives for any action (or lack of action), and or casting it in the most unfavorable light.

Not even her withdrawal from next year's presidential race seems to have abated suspicions. It has scarcely been two weeks since that declaration, and already it is being bruited about, not only by some members of the opposition but also some allies, that the reason she withdrew was that she knew (or would ensure) that there would be no elections next year.

Why? Well, the Constitution, they say, will be amended by Congress acting as a constituent assembly to shift to a parliamentary system in 2007, with a transition period during which incumbent officials will remain in place—from the President down to the lowest barangay council member. This, despite the fact that she has unequivocally stated that elections will take place in 2004, and that she doesn't think that this is the time to talk about Charter change. Yesterday morning, I heard Sen. Joker Arroyo effectively accusing her of being on the side of Charter change because of her statement that she would stay neutral on the issue.

On the other hand, if she had taken sides on the issue (over which the two chambers are apparently in disagreement), somebody else would have likely accused her of interfering with the legislative branch of government. See what I mean about damned if she does and damned if she doesn't?

Then there is her husband Mike, who makes for a much less sympathetic figure than his wife, and offers a bigger target to boot. He first became the subject of public ire over some telecommunications deal which, it turned out, he had nothing to do with, and which, even granting that he had something to do with it, was turned down by the President anyway. No matter, mud was flung at him, and a lot of it stuck.

His name was linked to the $200,000 monthly fee that was paid to that mysterious media consultant in the Piatco controversy. The gossip mill had it that he was the final payee, as a quid pro quo for the President's action favorable to Piatco. And no matter that the President finally decided against Piatco, Mike Arroyo's reputation remained in tatters. None of the politicians and opinion-makers who were sure that the Piatco deal would go through because of Mike's involvement bothered to admit their error.

It was argued that his presence was hurting the President, and it was strongly recommended by friend and foe alike, that the farther away he was from the action, the better for all concerned. Yet his designation as ambassador of goodwill to help overseas Filipino workers—which would have entailed frequent travel abroad, and thus kept him away from "trouble"—was met with so much flak, he turned it down.

Mike Arroyo, too, has been in the same no-win situation his wife finds herself in.

But while these two have more than their fair share of frustrations, I have my own candidate for Most Frustrated Filipino. He is Joe Concepcion.

Joe is otherwise known as "Mr. Namfrel" since he reorganized Namfrel under the worst conditions and, with over 250,000 volunteers in May 1984, showed the Filipino people that guns, goons and gold could be defeated by a committed citizenry. That experience led to the overwhelming response of 500,000 volunteers in the February 1986 snap elections, which culminated in the Edsa Revolt.

One would think that Namfrel had proven its worth. But every time elections come around, Namfrel and Joe have had to fight for accreditation, and sometimes they are treated by hostile election commissioners as if they were the cheaters rather than the watchdogs who prevent cheating.

Joe and Namfrel have fought for electoral reforms and automated elections since 1986. The law was finally passed at the end of 1997, but almost six years later, despite presentations, briefings, pleas, importunings and a media campaign on the part of Namfrel, automation is no nearer implementation than before. Definitely a hair-tearing, teeth-gnashing experience.

A lesser man than Joe would have given up long ago. But Joe fights on. He is eminently qualified to be the Most Frustrated Filipino. But he is also on my list as Most Admired Filipino, because what he is doing has never been for personal gain or glory, but for country and for God.

Senate coup fizzles out

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AS this column was being written yesterday, Senate President Franklin Drilon was holding a press conference during which he brushed aside talks of a Senate revamp during Monday's opening session. Just before his press con, I spoke to Drilon and he reiterated that there was no basis for the opposition's claim that he would be replaced by Sen. Edgardo Angara. Perhaps, Drilon said wryly, the media just embellished the coup talk because there was nothing much to write about while the Senate was not in session.

* * *

Speculation about Angara taking over Drilon's post escalated after the former held two meetings with President Macapagal-Arroyo last Dec. 20 and earlier this week. But Drilon seemed to firm up his hold on the post after GMA assured him of continued support. She reiterated this assurance Thursday afternoon when Drilon and six other coalition senators met with her at the Palace to give their inputs to her speech at the Makati Stock Exchange yesterday morning. Rumors had been flying thick and fast about a Senate coup, and one I heard was that the opposition would allow Drilon to keep his post but press for the replacement of various committee chairs. But even that would need a majority vote which the opposition doesn't have, unless two or three coalition senators switch sides. At the Palace, the PPC senators said they were staying put.

* * *

Among the 10 opposition senators, John Osmeña is staying with Drilon. Serge Osmeña said he'd stay away from both sides. So the opposition only has eight on its side. By late morning yesterday, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, apparently sensing that all was lost, announced in a press conference that he only got news of the coup from Angara.

With the coup fizzling out, we citizens can only hope the Senate truly stabilizes and the collaboration pledged by Angara's group to GMA will help speed up vital legislation. *Sana tapos na ang pulitikahan doon.*

* * *

Citizens shouldn't despair if President Macapagal-Arroyo's withdrawal from the 2004 race appears to have resulted in even more intense jockeying among various political parties and potential candidates. This is to be expected, as each potential candidate tries to boost his stock and gather support.

This is true of all candidates not just here but all over the world. In the US, for instance, the presidential elections are still in November 2004, much later than our May 2004 elections, but already key Democratic leaders are gearing up to challenge President Bush. The choice of the presidential candidate is normally done through the primaries, which are actually like an election participated in by party members in various states. Among the names being mentioned for the Democratic nomination are Senators Hillary Clinton of New York and John Kerry of Massachusetts, and Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri. But nobody is accusing them of too early electioneering.

Former Gov. Obet Pagdanganan had a good explanation about why it's important for candidates to come out early: they have to nail down commitments of support. But the renewed political fervor ought not to distract from what needs to be done to pull the country out of the current morass.

* * *

It's difficult to see the wisdom in some of the recent changes in the Cabinet. For instance, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye is perceived to be doing very well. A lawyer and former Ayala executive before he served three terms as mayor of Muntinlupa, Bunye was untried in his job as press chief. But he approached the task of explaining the presidency soberly and rationally, surprising the media. Hence the question is, why should he be replaced by Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, who has never been tried in what's definitely one of the toughest Cabinet posts?

* * *

But since the post of agrarian reform secretary is open, perhaps the President might wish to consider former UE Law dean and Government Corporate Counsel Amado D. Valdez. He has intimate knowledge of agrarian reform since his first experience in government was as no-nonsense administrator during the term of Heherson Alvarez in the Cory era. As director of the Bureau of Agrarian Legal Assistance, Valdez organized the "barefoot lawyers' program," which resulted in the disposal of at least 5,000 pending agrarian cases, including the 30-year-old Jala-Jala-Meralco agrarian case. Then as a consultant to Alvarez at the Senate, Valdez played a key role in drafting the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and the law creating the Cooperative Development Authority. He could very well be the steady, low-key plodder GMA needs there.

* * *

The drive for Charter change and shift to the parliamentary system of government gained a big boost recently when the 1,595-strong League of Municipal Mayors and the 124-strong League of City Mayors threw their support behind it. I imagine that what made Charter change attractive to the mayors is the wide autonomy they would get to run their own affairs, especially under a federal system, which they can't get under the present over-centralized system. Top business leaders have also joined academic leaders in supporting Charter change.

With the support of the mayors' leagues and Makati businessmen and academic leaders, the drive of the House majority should gather steam. What could happen is that the Senate will find itself increasingly isolated in this issue, with the senators being viewed as selfish obstructionists objecting out of fear that their chamber would be abolished, or because most of them have no real constituencies and would lose in elections for assembly members.

An alternative plan for Sandra

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I'M devoting this space today to rejoinders, or clarifications, to two recent columns.

The first is a clarification issued by new Environment Secretary Elisea "Bebet" Gozun, not to a column per se, but to news items that reported that striking tricycle drivers had won a "one-month reprieve from the Clean Air Act." I wrote a column that was in large part based on assertions made in various news reports, which may be why she faxed me a copy of her letter.

The implementation of RA 8749 or the Clean Air Act has not been suspended, she stressed. "Emission testings for all vehicles, including tricycles, will go on as scheduled." What the drivers "won," Gozun clarified, was a one-month suspension of an MMDA resolution urging local government units to stop granting new franchises to two-stroke tricycles starting this year.

Tricycle drivers, who had tied up traffic for hours by massing at Mendiola, were demanding that the MMDA resolution be recalled or revoked. "It was not the DENR that suspended the MMDA resolution. We merely announced the one-month suspension in Mendiola after the approval of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando," Gozun explained. The resolution is not a DENR order but an MMDA order approved by the MMDA Council composed of all mayors of the 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila.

* * *

GOZUN also clarified that the Clean Air Act does not call for the phaseout of two-stroke engines. "It merely sets emission standards for mobile sources of pollution," she notes, to which end the DENR has convened a technical working group "to fast-track the development of emission standards for tricycles which was left out in the implementing rules and regulations of the Clean Air Act."

But the environment secretary echoes a point I sought to put across in the column. "The law to clean the air has been in place for the last three years," she writes. "Ample time has been given for the public and the transport sector to comply with the law. We are now pushing for the full implementation of the law because the environment and human health should never be compromised. The country can no longer afford the economic burden incurred by dirty air. Studies show that each Filipino spends about P2,000 per year on health expenses caused by air pollution. But in doing so, we also recognize the livelihood needs of those concerned."

Clearly, Secretary Gozun is determined to carry out one of the main mandates the President issued when she appointed her to the department, which is the full implementation of the Clean Air Act. Let's hope we can hold our breath to see the clearer and cleaner results of such resolve.

* * *

SOURCES, reacting to yesterday's column on the arrest and detention of Sandra Carvalho Ocier, say there's a possibility both Sandra and the Bureau of Immigration could meet halfway and find a solution that meets both the requirements of the law and humanitarian concerns.

Sandra, whose story has been told in this space numerous times, is resisting deportation mainly because she has a pending case of annulment and is fighting for custody of her three young sons. Her fear that once she leaves the country she would lose touch entirely with the boys is not exactly unfounded, given her estranged husband's hostile behavior.

But, given the nature of Philippine laws, Sandra really has no choice but to follow the summary departure order, say my sources. The Supreme Court has ruled that the BID commissioner can no longer grant bail to anyone against whom an "SDO" has been issued.

Once she's abroad, though, Sandra can file a petition for her to be allowed entry to the Philippines and asking that her name be lifted from the "blacklist." She can cite two reasons: humanitarian, because her children are here and she is still fighting for their custody; and legal, because she still has to take care of her annulment case. "These are reasonable and legal grounds and should be heeded by the BID," say my sources.

Meantime, Sandra can request the BID to grant "recognizance" to any one of her Filipino friends, which would mean putting herself under the friend's custody, then apply for a pass "so that she can attend to her affairs and be able to prepare for her departure."

Sandra also has the option to appeal her case with the Office of the President, but while the appeal is being heard, she remains in detention.

* * *

THE LONGER Sandra's fight for a place and presence in her children's life has gone on, the more dubious her cause has seemed, at least to some observers. Why else would she persist, to the point of risking detention and deportation, to win custody of her sons from her husband, if not to cadge as much money as she can from the Ociers, a wealthy, influential Chinoy clan?

Well, her plight today should douse the speculation about Sandra's motives. Not only is Sandra penniless and struggling to hold on to her job while she pursues legal remedies, she has also been regularly harassed by the threat of deportation. Sandra claims that her estranged husband Henry offered her a substantial sum just to leave him and the boys alone, something I believe he is capable of doing. And if Sandra were not the kind of mother she is, given the aggravation she has undergone, she would have been justified in choosing to take the money and run.

Let's see if Sandra chooses to pick up the "alternative scenario" drawn up for her and if it plays out according to plan. As they say, *abangan*.

I shop, therefore I am

(With apologies to Barbara Kruger)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

TO A GREAT extent, our shopping habits are patterned on American society's habits, which shouldn't surprise anyone since we were probably both victims of Madison Avenue. The layout of our supermarkets are carbon copies and surely Henry Sy and John Gokongwei's shopping developments were inspired by the US landscape of strip malls, the ultimate in consumerism for the Filipina shopaholic no doubt. The incredible range of choices, the variety of the goods and the prices must convince us we've died and gone to heaven, especially during the sale days after Christmas. (I nearly bought a two-seater sofa bed once for no other reason than the price, considering I was a tourist. What brought me to my senses was that I didn't have a car to load it in!)

Apparently it doesn't bother us that most of the items are made anywhere these days but in the United States. (Sixty percent of the goods are from China, a country that is single-mindedly determined to be the manufacturing center of the world.) At one time during the era of the bases, when buying smuggled items in Cavite City or in Dao Market in Pampanga was a special treat for the whole family, our country was jokingly called "the land of the PX goods." I even know some people who used to buy their toilet paper either abroad or in PX stores. Even if you were to tell a Filipino that he can find anything he wants back home (provided of course he's got the money), he would find it impossible to visit the States and not shop even if it's only at the convenience store.

Through marketing genius, America has managed to convince vast majorities in the world of the American dream. Ostensibly this is about freedom and democracy ("Give me your huddled masses," etc.) but actually it's about suburbs and two-car garages and one's own home. The Filipino is really sold on the American way of life, but who can blame them?

Basically I believe a government run like hell has been the worst thing ever wished upon us. Let me correct that though: the 10 or 5 percent of the population that can afford it either have a place abroad and spend part of the year there anyway, with their household help in tow, but they certainly prefer the leisure and social life in the Philippines. But *kababayans* I've met claim that they would never have left their country of birth if corruption, peace and order and a surfeit of politics hadn't forced them to do so.

There is also the fact that unless you've got the connections or were born rich or are in politics, there is little opportunity for you to achieve financial security. This has become increasingly marked in the last quarter of a century. There used to be a time when Filipinos who studied abroad would return, knowing they had a good chance of finding gainful employment. Not anymore. These days the road to success seems to be either becoming a media star or running for office.

From all indications, professionals are now trying to emigrate, with certified doctors taking nursing courses and applying as nurses just to be able to get out. And these are the very people who would have formed the middle class of the country.

On the other hand, why would politicians want a thinking electorate? If the trend continues, there will soon be a president presiding over a country of illiterates and, given the degree of malnutrition, retardates as well. It boggles the mind to think that anyone can be such a low life as to perpetuate the situation rather than build a prosperous free republic that offers its citizens a future.

The downside to the American dream for the immigrant is loneliness, of course. This is true only for the first generation who makes the sacrifice to give their offspring a future. Their children, especially the ones born as American citizens, no longer crave *bagoong, tuyo* or *patis*. And they don't run to the nearest Chinese restaurant for some steamed rice, after having suffered withdrawal symptoms after a rice-less week.

Unlike back home, most of your friends and neighbors here are too busy (just like you) meeting those monthly payments (there are nine: federal tax, country tax, city tax, sales tax, mortgage, car payments, utilities, credit cards and insurance), hardly having time to go out and smell the daisies not to mention sitting for hours at a Starbucks Café. In fact, only retirees get to enjoy the travel opportunities and the plethora of museums and shows available, considering that the United States has only 20 holidays a year compared to Italy's 42. (I don't even dare guess how many we have, given the penchant of our presidents for declaring holidays.)

So unless our leaders wise up (and there are no indications that they have any desire to change the scheme of things), the brightest and the best of Filipinos will no longer march and demonstrate for change as they did during the First Quarter Storm (which got them exactly nowhere). The young are more cynical these days. They will merely file their applications and wait patiently for their immigrant's visa.

◆

The best gifts

YOUNG BLOOD

Ma. Agnes Q. Villanueva

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

HERE we are again, anticipating a bright year ahead of us, with a new list of resolutions to try to keep. Here we are, waving goodbye to the leftover food from the holiday feasts. Here we are, savoring the last view of the merry red and green decorations. Yup, another Christmas has come and gone.

And here I am, waiting once more for another Christmas. It's always like magic to me how the Christmas season lights up the streets and the faces of people. They just look kinder and happier. And it's something I always look forward to.

For our family, the Christmas season kicks off officially after All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. Exactly a week after the spooky season, my mom is done putting up the Christmas tree and Christmas decorations. On the third or fourth week of November, my dad would have already taken our Christmas family picture, which we send to relatives and friends. We've got a whole collection of such photos with the oldest ones dating back to 1983.

Past Christmases were highlighted by huge family reunions. But as the years passed, the number of relatives at the reunions gradually became smaller and smaller. Last Christmas, there were only one *tito*, one *tita*, three kids and our family of six were around. Compare that to years before, when four *titos* and six *titas* and so many other children would attend our reunion.

Next year we may not even have a reunion because the only family left to join us is joining all our other relatives in North America this year. Unless by some chance we get to go to North America, too, or we discover some new relatives in Manila, we will be spending our next Christmas without reunions. It will be a new experience, but I'm sure it will still be fun. I figure our family will be able to come up with some ways to spice up the holidays.

We aren't a difficult family to please, anyway. Like this year, we knew we were short on cash but that didn't spoil our holidays. Attending most of the Simbang Gabi celebrated by Msgr. Manuel Sebastian, who can be funny, made us happy. Going to the mall at Greenbelt, not to shop but to hear Mass in the chapel, was one of the highlights of the last Christmas season. Seeing the lights and watching the fireworks display afterwards was an extra treat. Visiting Policarpio Street, which has been touted as the Christmas capital in Manila and bringing home *bibingka* and *puto bumbong* were also one of our joys.

We were able to find playgrounds, where my sisters and I played on the swings, slides and seesaws. (By the way, did I mention that I am 18, while my sisters are aged 19, 17 and 11?) My parents would pass the time seated on the benches while my sisters and I played like monkeys, but there were occasions when they couldn't help but ride the swings, too.

We drove through the streets oohhing and aahhing at the fabulous Christmas lights people had set up in their homes. Manila was terrific at night, with all the lights on.

On Christmas Day, we counted the 10th beggar we saw and gave him P100. The grateful smile we received was a priceless treasure.

During the season, we finished the fourth issue of our yearly newsletter which we call "Our Home." Here, each family member contributes at least one article. The newsletter is sent to our relatives and friends. One of my sisters has set up a website for our newsletter, to make the accessing easier.

Last Christmas was one special Christmas for us. I guess God has a way of distributing happiness in the world. I am so thankful that I don't come from a broken family, no one in the family is hooked on drugs and my parents teach me and my sisters good values. I am grateful too that I had a fun-filled Christmas and for so many other things.

Although I'd very much like to have a personal computer, a chow-chow or a mountain bike as a gift, I'm still thankful that God didn't give those things. For God gave me something more special, something incomparable. Some surveys ask what were the best gifts people received on Christmas. If I were asked the same question, I would answer that the best gifts I have ever received are my family and my growing awareness that love is everywhere. They are God's gifts to me and I feel so blessed. And if I were to be asked what my Christmas wish for next year would be, it is that other people will receive my best gifts too.

Ma. Agnes Q. Villanueva, 18, is a second year Computer Science student at the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

A lesson in fidelity

Miblgrace M. Samonteza

ONE of the most enriching experiences I have usually happens when I go to early morning Mass, especially on ordinary days. Those who come to such Masses are mostly old people. Some might conclude that this is because old folks have little left to do. That may be true, but I have something different to say. Every time I see them, I witness a testimony to life-long perseverance and fidelity.

One time while at Mass, my attention was drawn to an old couple. While the woman looked active and caring like a typical wife, the old man, whom I presumed to be her husband, looked very fragile, even ailing. The woman helped him take his seat, but in no time at all he had dozed off. When it was time to say the Lord's Prayer, the wife, with much effort, bent over and stretched her arm toward her sleeping husband and, holding hands, they recited the prayer together.

It was a moving sight. It was to me a lesson in fidelity. In an age that is guided by hedonism and endless pursuit of gratification, here was a testimony to an unconditional and lifetime love and faithfulness.

Day after day, I see in church the same familiar faces, wrinkled and almost expressionless except for the inner peace and joy they radiate. I will not exchange this experience for the fleeting pleasures and empty promises of the material world. Even as I continue to lead a normal life, pursuing a career, building relationships and developing myself, I always go back to the things I see during Mass: the sense of commitment, loyalty and love of the old folks around.

Mihlgrace M. Samontesa, 25, is an architect.

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Too many coaches, too few good players

THE REASON the Macapagal administration has not really taken off is the same reason for our dismal performance in international sports competitions: too many coaches and too few good players.

Every day we read about how this or that person should be placed in this or that position as the best way to move the administration's program forward. Or why this or that person does not qualify for this or that position. Or why President Macapagal-Arroyo should focus on this rather than that program.

Conversely, we're almost nauseated to hear and read about politicians, sports leaders and opinion writers talking about how we could easily win more gold medals if only we do this or that. (It's grating to hear commentators talking as if they were Olympic champions or NBA champions!)

Enough coaching already! Leave the playing to the players!

The job of Congress, for instance, is to craft, review and improve legislation to protect and give more incentives to Filipino athletes who represent us in international competitions. These heroes deserve support, from training to their retirement.

The job of the opposition is to provide constructive criticism on the performance of the administration, while bearing in mind that when they assume power, they also need this kind of critical, but fair collaboration.

The job of the media is to be the watchdog of government performance and public interest.

The job of the public is to render a fair verdict on the performance of our elected officials via the vote we cast during elections.

The President has the prerogative to choose her players. We should judge her and her team by the results they deliver until her term ends in 2004.

That said, I do think former Senate President Jovito Salonga would have been perfect as justice secretary.

—ED DAMES,
23 Bagong Anyo St.,
De Castro Subdivision,
Sta. Lucia, Pasig City

No suspension of Clean Air Act implementation

ALLOW us to clarify news reports which came out in your newspaper on the recent strike of tricycle drivers and operators at the Don Chino Roces Bridge in Mendiola, Manila.

Contrary to what was published, the tricycle drivers did not win a "one-month reprieve from the Clean Air Act."

The implementation of Republic Act 8749 or the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999 has not been suspended. Emissions testings for all vehicles, including tricycles, will go on as scheduled.

Part of the eight-point agreement the government negotiating group forged with the tricycle drivers was that instead of going to privately owned testing centers that charge P300, the Land Transportation Office (LTO) will accommodate the tricycles in its Motor Vehicle and Inspection System (MVIS) which will only cost them P90.

What the drivers "won" was a one-month suspension of Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Resolution No. 02-36, approved by the Metro Manila Council, composed of all mayors of the 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila, urging local government units (LGUs) to stop granting new franchises to two-stroke tricycles starting this year in a bid to lessen air pollution. The tricycle drivers who trooped to Mendiola demanded, among other things, that the MMDA resolution be recalled or revoked.

It was not the Department of Environment and Natural Resources which suspended the MMDA resolution. We merely announced the one-month suspension in Mendiola after the approval of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando since the resolution is not a DENR order but an MMDA order approved by the MMDA Council.

We are now pushing for the full implementation of the law because the environment and human health should never be compromised. The country can no longer afford the economic burden incurred by dirty air. Studies show that each Filipino spends about P2,000 a year on health expenses caused by air pollution. But in doing so, we also recognize the livelihood needs of those concerned.

Cleaning the air is a daunting task and the media play a vital role in helping government shape an informed citizenry. For us to win the battle against pollution, we count on everyone's full support.

—ELISEA G. GOZUN,
secretary, Department
of Environment
and Natural Resources,
Visayas Avenue, Quezon City

Who will insure the deaf?

I AM Ervin R. Reyes and proud to be deaf. At present I am the deaf coordinator of the Manila Christian Computer Institute for the Deaf Foundation Inc.

The institute is a SEC registered, non-government organization, under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, training the deaf to become the best in computers. So far, we have been able to train more than 100 deaf individuals and are very thankful to the companies that trusted us by accepting our graduates. We are especially grateful to President Macapagal-Arroyo and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo who were able to hire six of our trainees.

We would also like to appeal to other companies and people to accept and try us, believe in our skills and allow us to work for them. We may not be able to hear but we compensate for that with our skills and our dedication to our work.

I am writing about the laws and policies governing insurance coverage. We go on educational trips and company visits and we want our students to be covered by insurance. Last December, our institute inquired for student-group insurance at Grepalife Insurance Corp. because it is one among the few insurance companies in the Philippines that offer group insurance. We almost reached an agreement for our insurance needs. But when their representative visited us and saw our faculty communicating to our students through sign language, her attitude underwent a sudden change, and she asked if we had students who were "normal."

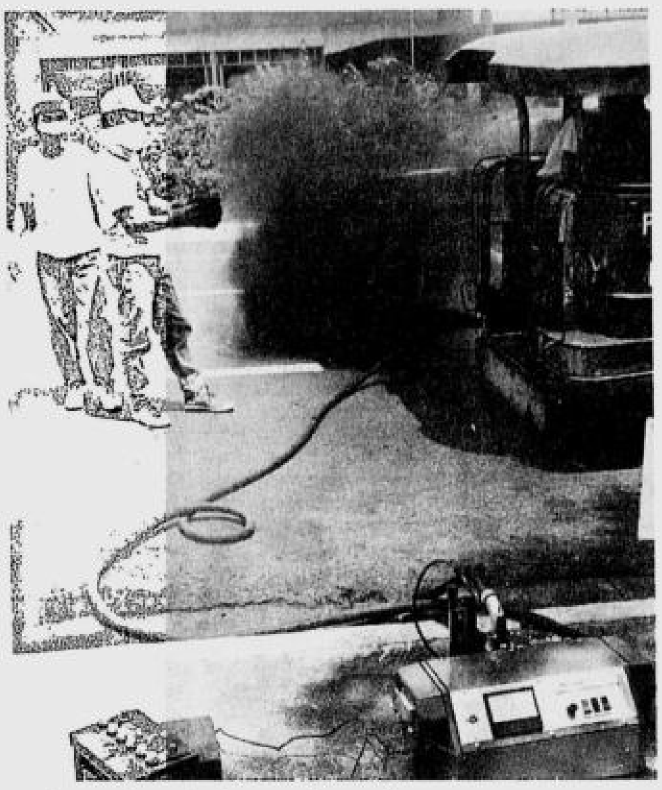
After we explained what our institute was all about, she started to suggest that we look for other insurance companies. She reasoned that her company had never encountered this kind of clientele and that she needed to talk this over first with her superiors.

We waited for another week but she never called us again.

Is there a law that bars a person with disability from being insured, or is this another form of discrimination? If one rides a bus or an airplane, is one not covered with insurance regardless of what your "disabilities" are? Aren't the risks and dangers we face the same as those other "normal" people face?

Republic Act 7277, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for the Disabled, accords the same rights and privileges to the disabled as what other citizens enjoy. We understand that insurance companies have the right to refuse applicants. But where can we go? Who will provide us with these vital services?

—ERVIN R. REYES,
deaf coordinator,
Manila Christian Computer
Institute for the Deaf
Foundation Inc.,
4447-D Old Sta. Mesa St.,
Sta. Mesa, Manila



Who should pay for clean air?

WHILE it is true that the implementation of the Clean Air Act (CAA) will reduce air pollution in the metropolis, the government is still in a dilemma over how to implement it correctly. Higher fuel oil prices, additional taxes, registration fees and more expensive vehicle spare parts are a burden on the Filipino people. Worse, the threat of at least one million tricycle and jeepney drivers who will lose their livelihood is the initial result of the government's one-sided implementation of the law.

The position of the government, as expressed by Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, is that everyone should be responsible for cleaning the air, but it does not want the government and big businesses, like the oil companies, to shoulder the economic cost of implementing the CAA. While the government wants to rally our people behind the environmental and health benefits of the act, it ignores its weaknesses and the complaints of our drivers and operators.

Before the implementation of the law, the government did not institute steps to discourage people from buying inefficient vehicle motors like two-stroke motorcycle engines. The government did not implement a program to encourage thousands of operators of this kind of vehicle to shift and own more environmentally efficient ones.

Saying it has no money, the government does not want any form of subsidies that will lessen the negative economic impact of the CAA on small drivers and operators. Yet it sees nothing wrong with agreeing to the imposition of the World Bank to collect additional fees and taxes as one of the component of the CAA. While the government has the guts to tell operators and drivers not to increase their transport fares, it sees nothing wrong with the oil companies passing the burden of producing cleaner fuels to the people by increasing fuel oil prices unreasonably.

Is the government so blind that it does not see the difference between the billions of profit of oil companies and the devaluating incomes of the people? The government has clearly created a political and economic smog for itself, at the expense of the masses who will lose their livelihood and who will have less food on their tables. The people should not pay the price for inhaling less polluted air in the metropolis.

—CLEMENTE G. BAUTISTA JR.
policy advocacy officer,
Kalikasan People's Network
for the Environment,
175-B Kamias Ext.,
Sikatuna Village, Quezon City

A theory of agricultural economics

PROF. Georg Raleigh Riya is a staunch proponent of libidocides to control population growth (among others) and anti-poverty corporations to generate jobs (among others). However, he is more popularly known for his agricultural economics in his "Landwirtschaftliche Betriebslehre."

To him, the P60 billion spent by the government for the Afma (Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act) is a lost expenditure. Not a single province's agriculture has been modernized, or a single crop improved.

The amount could have been simply used to match private investment in agriculture and fisheries, he said. Imagine 60 corporations turning out 60 commodities and capitalized at P2 billion each. Yet, the government investment remains intact instead of evaporating instantly.

Imagine the resulting modernization of agriculture and fisheries, the increased production, the jobs created, the foreign exchange generated and/or saved, the reduction in the budget deficit, the poverty alleviation of the farming population and other outcomes down the line.

Considering that we are at rock bottom, what are we waiting for?

I strongly urge Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo and the government's economic managers to reflect on Riya's propositions.

—J.R. KATIGBAK,
40 Panay Ave., Quezon City

Without a stamp of class

THE NEW five-centavo stamps are really a sight to behold. Even under a magnifying glass, the stamps seem to have been inspired by a fast-food advertisement.

I keep trying to understand the kind of mentality that would design such a government atrocity. Is this supposed to represent Pinoy culture?

—LOURDES V. SEVILLA,
19 Scout Rallos St., QC

Red tape at the DTI

WHAT is so complicated about registering a business name?

Only in the Philippines does it take 51 days or more to get a business registration. It's amazing!

I applied for registration of the business names of two companies. One was filed on Nov. 20, 2002 and the other the following day. Since then, I and my staff have followed up our application with the local office of the Department of Trade and Industry in Pangasinan. But to this day, I have not received any feedback as to whether my applications have been approved or rejected.

I am quite puzzled by the delay. The last time I applied for approval of the business name of a corporation, it took me less than 30 minutes to have the name reserved. Quite fast, thanks to the sense of urgency and efficiency of the people working at the Securities and Exchange Commission.

But the DTI is different. Some of its people cannot finish a very simple transaction in 30 minutes. They need more than 51 days to finish what is basically a ministerial work. To them, registering a business name is as complicated as nuclear science.

To President Macapagal-Arroyo and Secretary Mar Roxas II: If you wish your approval rating and the economy to improve, please have your people "un-complicate" a rather simple business name registration process. *Kawawa kaming maliliit na negosyante. Ubos na ang kapital namin sa kahihintay sa* business registration *na iyan. Pababalikin ninyo ako sa* Saudi Arabia *ng wala sa oras.*

—SAMUEL B. PALAGANAS,
310 Tambac, Malasiqui
2421 Pangasinan

Reunions

COMMENTARY

Natalia M.L.M. Morales

A MUCH-ANTICIPATED tradition among many Filipinos here and abroad is the reunion among friends or family, particularly during the holiday season. Clans, families, schoolmates, batchmates and members of any group look forward to reunions with feelings of joy, although some look at them with a bit of trepidation. To one who has something to share or even show off—social status, position, achievement, or whatever—reunions are occasions for confirmation or vindication. Confirmation for those whose record of performance has been consistent and vindication for those who made dramatic improvements in their lives. Whatever the reason for the reunion, the unspoken boast is always "Look at me now" or "See what I told you" or simply the self-effacing "I'm still the same but I feel great."

Reunions are as natural to the Filipinos as the crunchy crust of cooked glutinous rice that sticks to the bottom of the earthen jar. The bonding is spontaneous like the good feeling of knowing about the good fortune of a kin or pal. The crab mentality must have been a colonial invention to keep us divided.

In recent years, reunions have turned into a measure of how Filipinos have become global and how the world has been instructed in Filipino ways and values.

A classmate at the Quezon City High School, Generoso Abesamis, provides an inspiring lesson. A builder-contractor based in Richmond City, California (in the greater San Francisco Bay Area), he studied engineering at the University of the Philippines and National University. He moved to California in 1977 and easily found work along his line. More luck paired him with another classmate Magdalena Aldana, who was much admired for her charm in high school. Together, they raised a family of three sons and cared for the wife's parents who decided to spend their retirement in the United States. The Filipino spirit of caring and sharing never left them as they worked to make their American dream come alive.

Not content with renting a house, Generoso bought a property in 1990 at the heavily wooded area of the Tilden mountains behind the campus of the University of California at Berkeley. The area is a natural habitat for American flora and fauna.

When he started building his house, it caused quite a stir in the mostly White Anglo-Saxon Protestant neighborhood that saw in the Filipino a threat to the natural environment. His future neighbors claimed that the lot he bought could have been put to better use as playground or garbage dump for the community.

But being honed in the technical aspect of his profession, Generoso gave his opponents no solid basis for blocking his dream of finally building his own house. He ensured the safety of the multi-level structure by digging many meters into the ground to build a strong foundation. He designed a maze of a structure so that every old tree found in his property would not be cut down. In short, he made sure that his neighbors could not raise any ecological or environmental issue against his dream house.

Although the issue never reached the courts, Generoso had to face a battery of zoning arbitrators. After about three years of hearings and appeals, he finally won the right to build his own house.

His years of apprenticeship in the Philippines with a distant relative who is now a justice of the Supreme Court came in handy. He knew how to tackle the legal issues raised against his project and combined this with his technical know-how.

But after he was finished building his house, new issues were raised against him. This time, he was ready to counter with charges of harassment and racism.

After some time, the problem died down. But now he is again fighting for the right to make changes in his abode before the city's zoning board which wants him to show these changes comply with city ordinances.

I had always known Generoso as a quiet, soft-spoken classmate who never got into fights with the other boys during our growing up years. So, at our class reunion, I was impressed by the transformation he had undergone. It made me happy to see someone I know fight an oppressive situation and win.

Generoso's formula for winning was a combination of the Filipino values—caring, courage and the sense of fairness, principle of equality and opportunity, which are the trademark of American democracy. To him the wonderful result of standing up for his rights was a feeling of self-fulfillment and pride.

Interestingly, I came to know Generoso's full story not in a deliberate and dramatic manner. It just unfolded as he drove my family from San Francisco to Richmond and back. But after seeing the three-level duplex he had built with a charming bridge spanning a small brook running across the property, I was convinced it was a battle well fought. In his abode and person, and in the members of his family I caught a glimpse of the real Filipino soul, one that bids him not to run away from a righteous fight for his family, for his dream and for his God-given rights. The brave Filipino soul does not fight once, but continues to fight and refuses to accept as given an unjust situation. It's good to know that fairness finally prevailed in Generoso's case.

Having served as a police commissioner in the city (a non-paying job in many small cities across America), Generoso knew that millions of Filipinos in America belong to the silent minority because of limited opportunities to speak out and make a difference. His personal experience presented him with the opportunity to fight and be heard. His biggest achievement was welding his personal rights with zeal and an activism that matched the spirit of the community of which he and his family are part of.

Thanks to reunions, we hear stories like this one.

Natalia M.L.M. Morales is a professor of Political Science and International Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman. E-mail her at nataliam91@hotmail.com

Gov't troopers, Moro rebels clash in Sultan Kudarat; 3 dead

FIGHTING has erupted anew between government troops and Muslim separatist guerrillas in Sultan Kudarat, the military and a rebel spokesperson said Friday.

Eid Kabalu, spokesperson for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, claimed three soldiers were killed and four guerrillas were wounded in gun battles after government troops fired at least 25 rounds of 105-mm howitzer shells early Thursday on a rebel base in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat province.

Military spokesperson Maj. Julieto Ando, however, said government forces killed three Moro rebels. He said one soldier was wounded.

Later in the day, two MG-520 helicopter gunships fired at least 16 rockets on the 105th Base Command of the MILF, Kabalu said. Shelling resumed early Friday outside Columbio, he said.

The military said the 39th Infantry Battalion encountered 70 members of a kidnap gang outside Columbio who were allegedly aided by more than 200 MILF guerrillas. It said there were no immediate reports of casualties on either side.

Kabalu said the military often used its pursuit of the kidnap gang, named Pentagon, as an excuse to attack MILF forces in violation of a ceasefire agreement.

"Even granting for the sake of argument that there are some Pentagon members in our group, that is not the procedure following the provisions of the ceasefire agreement," he said.

He said the military should have filed a formal protest with a ceasefire monitoring committee.

The Pentagon gang, whose members include former rebels, has been included in a US list of terrorist organizations.

The MILF, which has been fighting for Muslim autonomy in southern Mindanao for the past three decades, agreed to a shaky truce in 1997 when peace talks opened.

Due to numerous charges of violations on both sides, the government and the rebels renewed the ceasefire agreement in August 2001, but clashes continue to flare up sporadically.

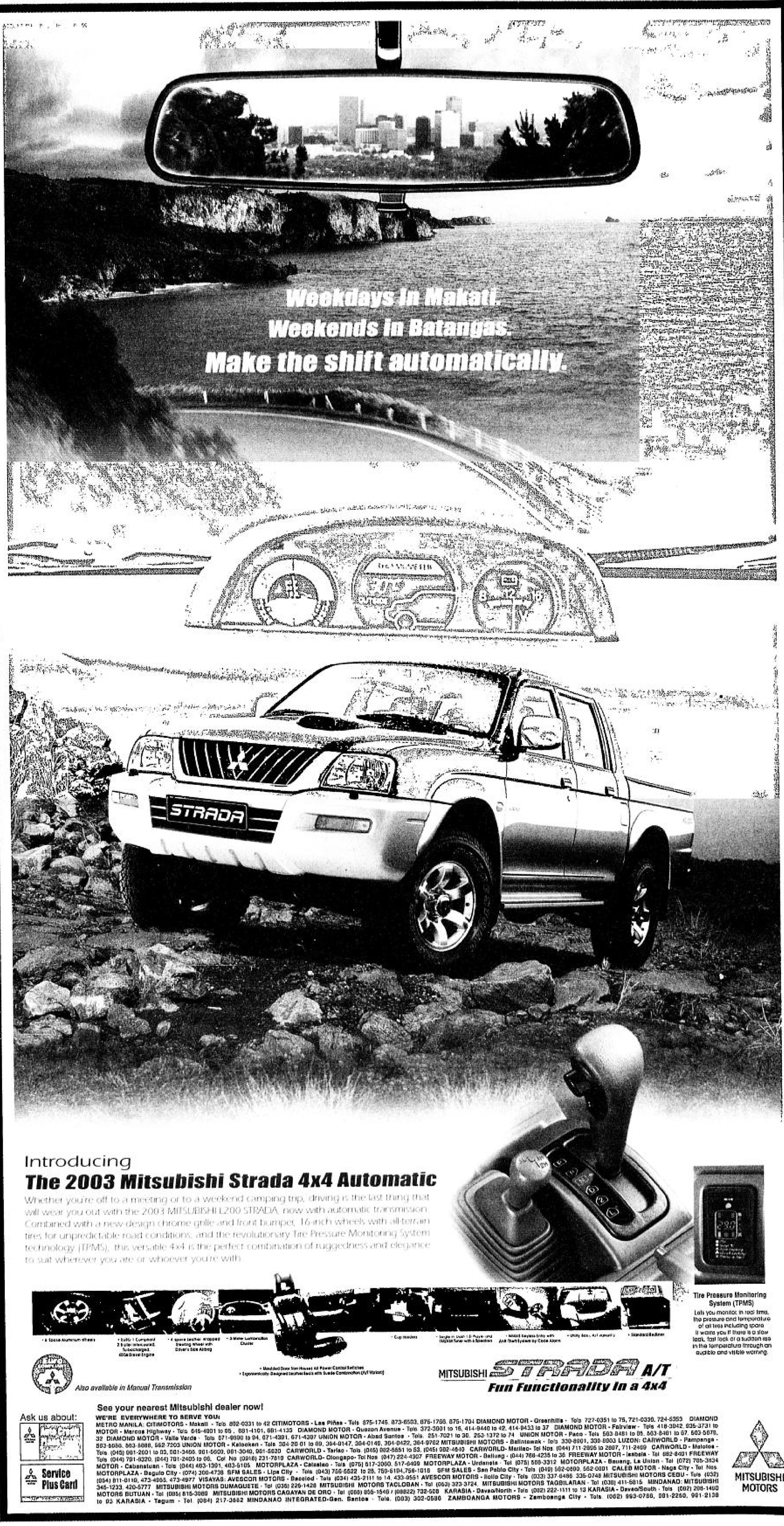
With AFP report

Tatad kin, 71

CARMEN S. Tatad, elder sister of former Sen. Francisco "Kit" Tatad, died yesterday in a hospital after a period of confinement. She was 71.

She is survived by her brothers and sisters Bernardino, Milagros, Kit, Manuel, Elizabeth and Fernando; her sisters-in-law Virginia, Fenny, Marilyn and Marini; brother-in-law Manolo "Boy" Carandang; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Her body will lie in state at Funeraria Nacional in Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment will be on Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2003 at Himlayang Pilipino, after a 9 a.m. Catholic Mass.



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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

No 'smoking gun' so far—Blix

By Evelyn Leopold and Nadim Ladki

UNITED NATIONS/BAGHDAD—UN inspectors on Thursday gave a mixed interim report on Iraq's arms programs, providing ammunition both to those backing US preparations for a possible conflict and for the anti-war camp.

Chief weapons inspector Hans Blix said his teams had so far found no "smoking gun" but added Iraq had failed to answer many questions about its armaments. Baghdad said it would do so.

Washington appeared unimpressed with Blix's double-edged comments.

"The problem with guns that are hidden is you can't see their smoke," a White House spokesperson told reporters. "We know for a fact that there are weapons there."

Blix's remarks, made to reporters as he prepared to brief members of the UN Security Council, were interpreted by the markets as making war more likely, and oil prices quickly rose.

In the nearly seven weeks since inspections resumed in Iraq, he said, "we have been covering the country in ever-wider sweeps, and we haven't found any smoking guns."

But Blix, head of chemical, biological and ballistic arms inspections, said he was dissatisfied with the 12,000-page document Iraq submitted in December after the UN Security Council demanded it give a full account of its arms programs.

"We think that the declaration failed to answer a great many questions," Blix said."

He said it was up to Iraq to show it did not have banned weapons, not for his staff to prove it did. "Iraq cannot just maintain that it must be deemed to be without proscribed items as long as there is no evidence to the contrary," he said.

Among suspected items unaccounted for in Iraq's declaration, he said, were stocks of VX gas, imports of missile engines, ingredients for production of missile fuel and chemical bombs.

The US ambassador to the United Nations, John Negroponte, also insisted the burden of proof was on Iraq. "Anything less is not cooperation and will constitute further material breach," he said.

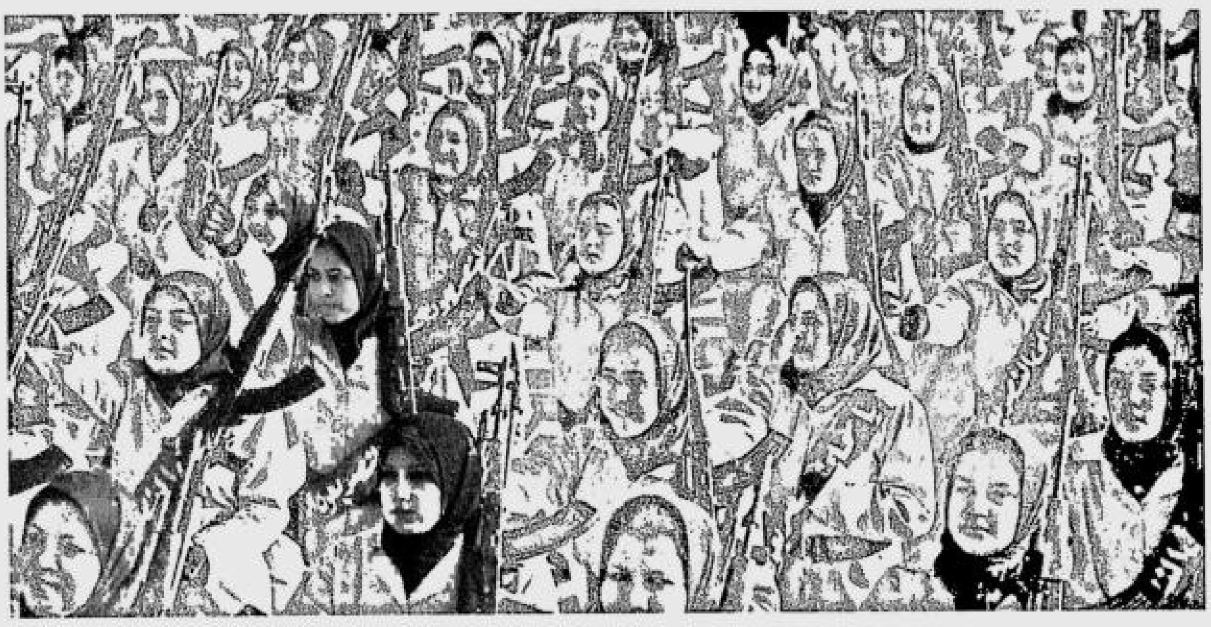
Within hours, a senior Iraqi official said Iraq was ready to answer questions over its declaration but added UN inspections had vindicated its claim to have no banned arms. "We are ready to respond to the questions which will be directed to us," Hussam Mohammed Amin told a news conference in Baghdad.

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog which is separately responsible for investigating nuclear-related activity in Iraq, was also reporting to the UN Security Council on Thursday.

"To date, no evidence of ongoing prohibited nuclear or nuclear-related activities has been detected, although not all of the laboratory results of sample analysis are yet available," Mohamed ElBaradei said.

He said aluminum tubes suspected of being part of an Iraqi nuclear arms program were in fact unsuitable for that use.

The arms inspections in Iraq are based on a November UN resolution which threatened the oil-rich state with "serious consequences" if it failed to cooperate with the UN teams. *Reuters*



IRAQI woman volunteers holding Ak-47 rifles join a military march in Baquba City, 40 km northeast of Baghdad Jan. 7, to declare their readiness to defend Iraq against any US invasion.

REUTERS

Peru airliner missing; 46 feared dead

LIMA—Authorities late Thursday called off a search in Peru's mountainous northern jungle, after an airliner carrying 42 passengers and four crew members went missing, Vice President Raul Diez Canseco said.

It was still unclear where exactly the aircraft had gone down as it headed toward the Amazonian city of Chachapoyas earlier in the day, Diez Canseco said.

Air force planes and helicopters scoured the hillsides for the TANS airline Fokker-28 which disappeared from radar screens at about 8:45 a.m., officials said.

Diez Canseco said poor weather conditions had made aerial search operations difficult. Ground searches will be launched early Friday, he said.

Earlier, Civil Defense officials in Lima said the plane may have been located in an area known as Lonya Chico, in the rugged Luya region, some 2,300 meters above sea level.

However, the officials said, it was too early to know the condition of the plane or if there were any survivors.

Air force planes and helicopters were ordered to the region along with police and rescue teams. President Alejandro Toledo meanwhile met officials to discuss the missing airliner.

Chachapoyas is located some 900 km north of Lima, on the eastern slope of the Andes, where the mountains descend into the Amazon River basin. It is the capital of Amazonas province.

TANS airline spokesman Jorge Belevan said an emergency was signaled after the airline lost contact with the plane as it approached Chachapoyas. *AFP*

BLACK COAST

REUTERS

A Spanish soldier cleans fuel oil washed ashore from the sunken Prestige oil tanker near Carnota on Spain's devastated North-West Atlantic coast Jan. 9. Oil has blackened hundreds of miles of pristine Spanish coastline, shutting down fishing and seafood industries and forcing thousands of Spaniards to live off government handouts.

US plans bid to break Venezuela impasse

VENEZUELA-USA WASHINGTON—The Bush administration plans an initiative to form a group of nations to help end a strike in Venezuela that has crippled oil exports from the major oil supplier to the United States, The Washington Post reported on Friday.

The administration has generally taken a low-profile approach to the five-week strike but will unveil within a week the plan calling for the group to develop a proposal—probably based on holding early elections—to end the impasse in the world's No. 5 petroleum exporter.

The plan would be presented through the Organization of American States, which is mediating between leftist President Hugo Chavez and an opposition that wants him to resign, the paper reported, citing US and foreign diplomatic sources.

A White House spokesperson was not immediately available for comment on the report.

Washington lost credibility in Venezuela when it appeared to welcome a coup last year that briefly ousted Chavez.

But it hopes the plan will head off an initiative by left-leaning Brazil to form its own "group of friendly nations" to resolve the crisis that the United States believes would be counterproductive, the newspaper said.

The Bush administration, which had steered clear of the turmoil in the South American nation was prompted to get involved because of increasing concern about an oil shortage as it prepares for a possible war with Iraq, the Post said.

Venezuela supplies about 13 percent of US crude imports.

"We were getting 1.5 million barrels of oil each day and we're not getting it now," a senior State Department official told the newspaper. The official was quoted as saying that U S concerns had multiplied over the past week as Chavez moved to restructure the state-owned oil company.

According to the paper, the immediate aim of the US initiative would be to end the strike that has battered Venezuela's economy, rattled global energy markets and stoked tensions in a divided nation.

Brazil would be part of the "Friends of Venezuela" group Washington will propose, the Post said. The other participants would be the United States, Mexico, Chile, possibly Spain and a representative of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Venezuela's opposition, which draws on wide support from business, union and civic sectors, accuses Chavez of wanting to create a communist state and has vowed to continue their strike until he resigns or calls elections. *Reuters*

India prepares to grant dual citizenship

NEW DELHI—Hoping to cash in on the success of people overseas of Indian origin, New Delhi will soon grant some of them dual citizenship, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said Thursday.

An estimated 20 million ethnic Indians live around the world—the legacy of the far-flung British Empire and a more recent diaspora fueled by a desire for better jobs, business opportunities and education.

Vajpayee announced the plan on Thursday when he honored some 1,500 foreign Indians—including Nobel laureates, businesspeople and politicians. He did not say who would be eligible for the dual citizenship.

The celebrations of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, or Overseas Indian Day, are to encourage people of Indian heritage to invest and forge stronger links with the home of their forebears.

It is also part of the Hindu-nationalist governing party's program of celebrating "Indian-ness" and its effort to get Indians abroad, and their descendants, to promote the country and lobby for it with foreign governments.

Vajpayee said the day would be celebrated each year on Jan. 9, the day Mohandas K. Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 to lead India's independence struggle.

"We are working out the administrative regulations and procedures governing dual citizenship and will introduce the necessary legislation during the budget session of Parliament," Vajpayee said. *AP*

Vampire bats may help stroke victims survive

WASHINGTON—An enzyme that lets vampire bats freely slurp blood from their prey may help stroke victims survive, and do it more safely than the only currently approved treatment, Australian researchers reported on Thursday.

The compound stops blood from clotting and is similar to a commercial clot-dissolving drug, the researchers report in this week's issue of the journal Stroke.

But the bat saliva enzyme—called Desmodus rotundus salivary plasminogen activator, or desmoteplase—is hundreds of times more powerful than current drugs.

Desmoteplase destroys fibrin, the structural scaffold of blood clots, said Robert Medcalf of Monash University in Victoria, Australia.

"When the vampire bat bites its victim, it secretes this powerful clot-dissolving substance so that the victim's blood will keep flowing, allowing the bat to feed," Medcalf said in a statement.

Many scientists have looked to the saliva of bloodsucking animals such as bats and leeches, as well as insects like ticks, for drugs that can help stop blood clots, for use in treating not only stroke but also heart attacks. Such animals often produce natural anticoagulants.

Dozens of drugs based on such compounds are in development.

Desmoteplase is being developed by PAION, a biopharmaceutical company based in Aachen, Germany. It is nearing final phase II/III trials in stroke victims.

Researchers at the company found that desmoteplase was genetically related to the clotbuster tissue plasminogen activator, known as alteplase or tPA and made by Genentech.

For the Stroke study, the Australian team injected either desmoteplase or t-PA into the brains of mice, then watched how their brain cells survived. TPA could kill brain cells but desmoteplase did not, they reported.

This could mean desmoteplase has the potential to help many more stroke victims than tPA—because it could be given for many hours after a stroke, Medcalf said. TPA has to be given during a three-hour window of opportunity—during which many people do not even realize they have suffered a stroke.

"This report provides data suggesting a potential advantage of a type of plasminogen activator derived from bat saliva over tPA, the only Food and Drug Administration-approved treatment for selected patients with acute ischemic stroke," Dr. Larry Goldstein, chair of the American Stroke Association Advisory Committee, said in a statement. *Reuters*

$10-B highway planned deep beneath Tokyo

TOKYO—Japan's transport minister said Friday the national government and the Tokyo metropolitan government had agreed on a proposal to build a 16-km expressway deep underground to save the cost of buying valuable land in the capital.

The idea would allow the construction of the Gaikondo expressway to take place without expensive land purchases, Chikage Ogi, minister of land, infrastructure and transport told a press conference.

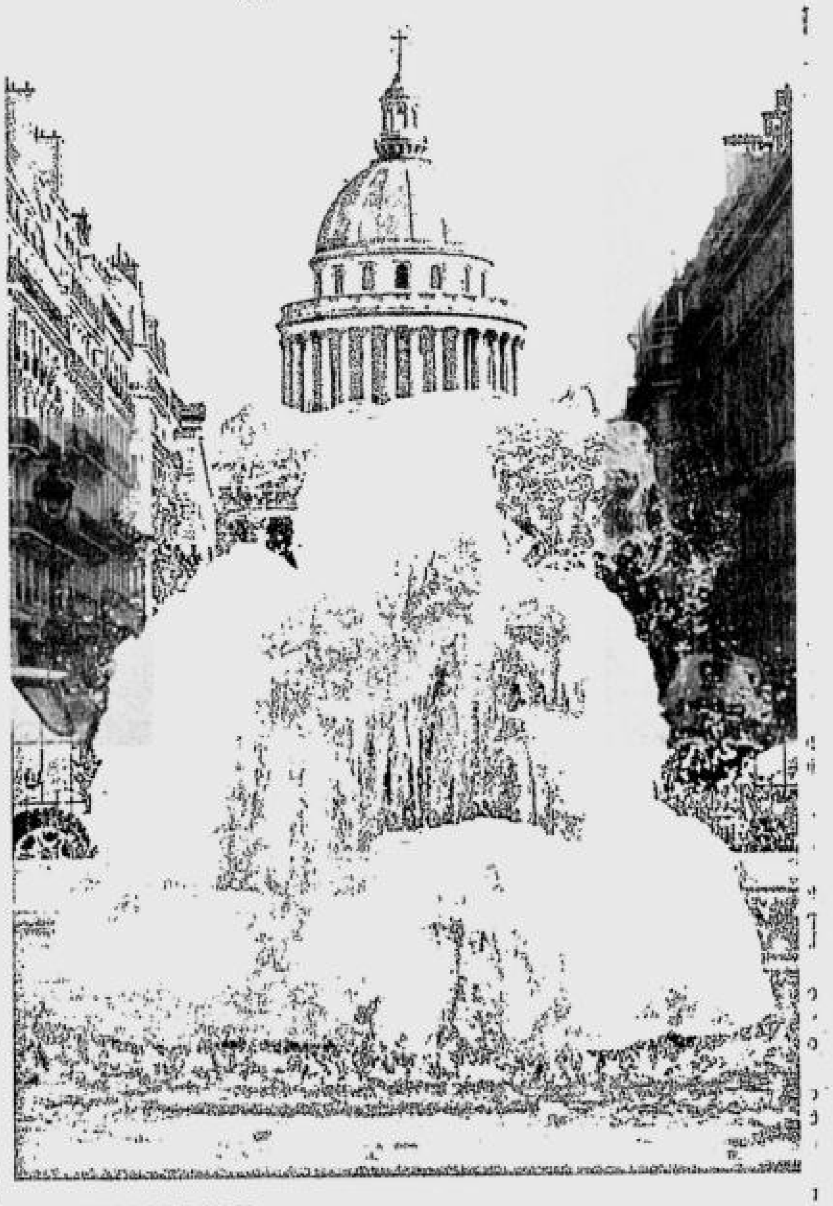
The ring road section will be built at least 40 meters underground where its proposed route cuts through one of the most affluent residential areas of central Tokyo.

The construction cost of the subterranean highway will be about 300 billion yen ($2.5 billion) cheaper than the 1.5 trillion yen estimated for building an above-ground highway in the densely populated area, the minister said.

"We also want to cut the time required for the construction from 15 years to a half of that," she said.

The transport ministry will discuss the proposal with the mayors of local communities that will be affected.

The government hopes to make its final decision by the yearend after gaining the understanding of local residents, Ogi said. *AFP*



FREEZING IN PARIS

A frozen fountain is seen with the Pantheon in background, in Paris, Jan. 9, as temperatures stood at 6 degrees Celcius (21°F). The cold has killed a fourth homeless person in three days, rescue workers said.

AP

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NPAs own up ambush of 3 militiamen, Army 'asset'

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The New People's Army (NPA) in Central Visayas has owned up the Dec. 11 ambush that killed three militiamen and a motorcycle driver.

In a statement written in Cebuano, Noel Vera, spokesperson of the NPA's Francisco Dagohoy Command, said the ambush in Barangay Taming, Dagohoy town was carried out to punish Pedro Panlimutan, 52, and Dorico Payusan, 52, members of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit.

The statement, however, did not mention anything about Vicente Rebone, 21, of Poblacion, Dagohoy, who was also killed during the ambush.

Aside from working against the revolutionary movement, Vera described Panlimutan and Payusan as "abusive" men who fired their guns indiscriminately and beat up barrio folk when drunk.

Vera also disputed allegations that the fourth fatality, motorcycle driver Oliver Canino, 22, was a civilian.

He blamed Sgt. Rolando Gumisan of the Army's 15th Infantry Battalion, for tapping Canino and using his motorcycle during an operation that placed Canino at risk.

"The Francisco Dagohoy Command and the Red Fighters as a whole, made sure that they (would) protect civilian lives during the conduct of the war and it was not intentional that the said civilian was hit as a consequence," the statement said.

Vera alleged this was a result of the Cafgu men's use of Canino for their military activities.

At the same time, Vera claimed Canino was not a "simple civilian" but was an agent used as a guide during operations.

Vera alleged that Canino would even wear a uniform on some occasions.

The paramilitary men, he added, were proceeding to Taming, which was celebrating its feast at the time, to allegedly guard gambling activities.

Vera claimed that the proceeds would be divided among military personnel, Cafgus and barangay councilors.

Vera's allegation was contrary to military reports that the slain Cafgus were on normal patrol duty.

DISCRIMINATION SUIT

Villar firm 'biased' vs Muslims

ILIGAN CITY—Tired of waiting for an official explanation why they could not own their dream house at the Cagayan Communities Inc. (CCI), a subdivision in Cagayan de Oro City owned by the family of Sen. Manuel Villar, a couple here decided to sue.

On Jan. 6, Dr. Janeth Sumalpong and her husband Jamail Kamlian filed a formal complaint against the CCI for "unsound business practices" before the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) in Cagayan de Oro City.

The Kamlians were also seeking the payment of damages to them by the CCI and its operations manager, Bernadeth Maranga.

An official from the HLURB said it was the agency's first time to deal with such a case.

Fees paid

Last year, Mrs. Kamlian applied to purchase a piece of property at the CCI.

After having paid the fees for the processing of her application and after being given a tour of the subdivision, Mrs. Kamlian was looking forward to owning the family dream house.

But after a while, she was informed that her application was rejected because her husband is a Muslim.

The firm offered to return the P10,000 reservation fee that Mrs. Kamlian paid but the couple had rejected the offer.

The CCI never answered the INQUIRER's questions about the Kamlians' case.

In an eight-page complaint filed on behalf of the Kamlians, lawyer Gerardo Paguio demanded that the CCI pay his client a total of P5.7 million in damages.

These included P4 million for moral damages, P1.5 million for "despicable acts of unmitigated discrimination against Muslim Filipinos," and another P1 million for "nominal damages for breach of contract."

"We can file (claims for damages) even higher than (P5.7 million), but we are no longer interested in money as of now. The anguish, nightmares, humiliation and emotional trauma, all cannot be quantified into monetary terms," Mr. Kamlian told the INQUIRER in an interview.

'Relief'

He branded the suit as "a temporary relief" from the pain that the couple suffered as a result of the humiliation that they received from the real estate company.

"At least now, I have something to lighten the burden of pain (with). Let's just hope that our judicial and legal system will have something positive to (contribute to and) come up in this case," Mr. Kamlian said. *Jeffrey Maningo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Canlubang farmers appeal SC ruling on disputed land

By Christine Gaylican and Michael Lim Ubac

REYNALDO Lazo, 53, has been tilling a hectare of land he inherited from his father in Canlubang, Laguna all his life.

But though Lazo knows every nook and cranny in the farm that he tills, he could still not say that it is his as he and his neighbors' land ownership case has been languishing in the Supreme Court for the past 10 years.

"We don't know what is going (on) there. There could be an anomaly because our case has been moved from one division of the Supreme Court to another for no reason at all," farmer group representative and spokesperson Andy Magtoto told the INQUIRER.

The farmers, accompanied by their families, trooped to the Supreme Court Building on Taft Avenue in Manila at dawn Wednesday to dramatize their plight.

Carrying placards, they pleaded with the SC justices during their rally to finally settle the land reform dispute.

The farmers asked the High Court to admit the second motion for reconsideration they filed on Jan. 2.

Usually, the SC does not accept a second motion for reconsideration as it is considered a prohibited pleading under the Rules of Court.

But the farmers led by Barangay Casile Chair Sergio Cruzat, Barangay Agrarian Reform Council Chair Cresencio Amante and Samahan ng Magsasaka sa Casile leader Reynario Lazo asked the SC to admit the motion "in the interest of justice."

"We really don't know what happened to the case in the SC. If only the justices read the 'records' of the case, they could have ruled in our favor," said Cruzat.

Cruzat said the farmers' plea to the justices was simple: Just take time to read the records of the case.

The land reform case involves 252.76 hectares of land and was elevated to the SC in 1993.

Located in Barangay Casile, Canlubang, the land is within an area considered part of the Canlubang Estate owned by the heirs of former Assemblyman Luis Yulo.

What compelled the farmers to pursue the case was the fact that the Department of Agrarian Reform Adjudication Board (Darab) had ruled that the lands were covered by CARP.

The DAR even issued certificates of land titles to them in 1991.

The Darab ruling was subsequently recognized by the Solicitor General's Office and even upheld by the appellate court.

However, when the case was elevated to the SC, the Special First Division stunned the farmers by remanding the case to Darab "for re-evaluation and determination of the nature of the parcels of land."

When they sought a reconsideration of the ruling, the SC through Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. junked it, saying there was no substantial argument to warrant a reversal of the ruling.

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HUWAG MAGPAGAMIT !!!
SAMACA
BRGY. CASILE, CABUYAO, LAGUNA

FIGHTING for land that they tilled since 1910, farmers from Cabuyao picket the Supreme Court Wednesday. ERIK ARAZAS

The Special First Division is composed of Justices Davide, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Alicia Austria-Martinez, Renato Corona and Conchita Carpio-Morales.

The ruling, issued on Nov. 20, 2002, then became final and executory.

The Darab said in 1991 that the lands are the "foundation" of the Yulo empire which metamorphosed into several big corporations, among them Sta. Rosa Realty, Canlubang Golf and Country Club, Laguna Estate and Development Corp., Canlubang Sugar Estate and eight other corporations.

The farmers and their forefather had been cultivating the land since 1910, and the Darab found them to be actual tillers and bona fide residents and actual voters of Barangay Casile.

They have been tilling the lands long before Vicente Madrigal acquired the land in 1941 and before he sold the estate to Yulo in 1948. In 1974, the land was registered in the name of Sta. Rosa Realty.

The Darab, among others, also ordered the Land Bank of the Philippines to open a trust account in the name of the SRRDC in the amount of P7.8 million as compensation for the lands.

On March 10, 1992, the SRRDC filed a petition before the appellate court to reverse the Darab ruling.

The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling on Nov. 5, 1993, saying the 85 farmers were residents and actual tillers of the disputed land.

In the same month, the realty firm filed a petition for review with the SC, claiming that the Darab and the CA committed grave abuse of discretion in ruling that the lands were covered by CARP.

The petition said the SRRDC properties were zoned and approved as a "park" since 1979, and it also formed part of a watershed area.

But the farmers argued that the DENR also issued a certification that the only declared watershed in Laguna and San Pablo City was the Carilao-Lumot Rivers.

They also claimed that the 1979 municipal ordinance classifying the properties as park was repealed in 1994 by Ordinance No. 94-78.

In 1993, The DAR's Adjudication Board and the Court of Appeals upheld that there is not enough evidence indicating that the contested land is a "watershed area." Moreover, Darab said the land had already been developed and could not be exempted from "CARP coverage."

However, the Sta. Rosa Realty Development Corp. has contested the decision of the CA and Darab in the Supreme Court.

Cocoland CARP's next target as DAR enters deals

THE DEPARTMENT of Agrarian Reform has entered into partnerships with the Philippine Coconut Authority and the Liga Magniniyog, a confederation of farmers' organizations, to fast track the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in coconut lands.

Outgoing Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza said in a statement his department signed a memorandum of understanding with PCA and Liga Magniniyog to expedite the distribution under CARP of about 700,000 hectares of coconut lands all over the country.

Braganza said they also agreed to work together to implement leasehold arrangements on coconut lands and help resolve agrarian reform conflicts that threaten to reverse previous gains in land distribution.

Under the leasehold program, the tenants are given security over the land and guaranteed a 75 percent share of the crop harvest.

Braganza admitted that the lack of control and ownership of coconut lands has resulted in the continuing poverty of landless coconut farmers, tenants and farm workers.

Under the memorandum, the Liga Magniniyog has been tapped to help DAR identify landholdings that should be distributed under CARP.

The two parties also agreed to work together in ensuring the installation of agrarian reform beneficiaries.

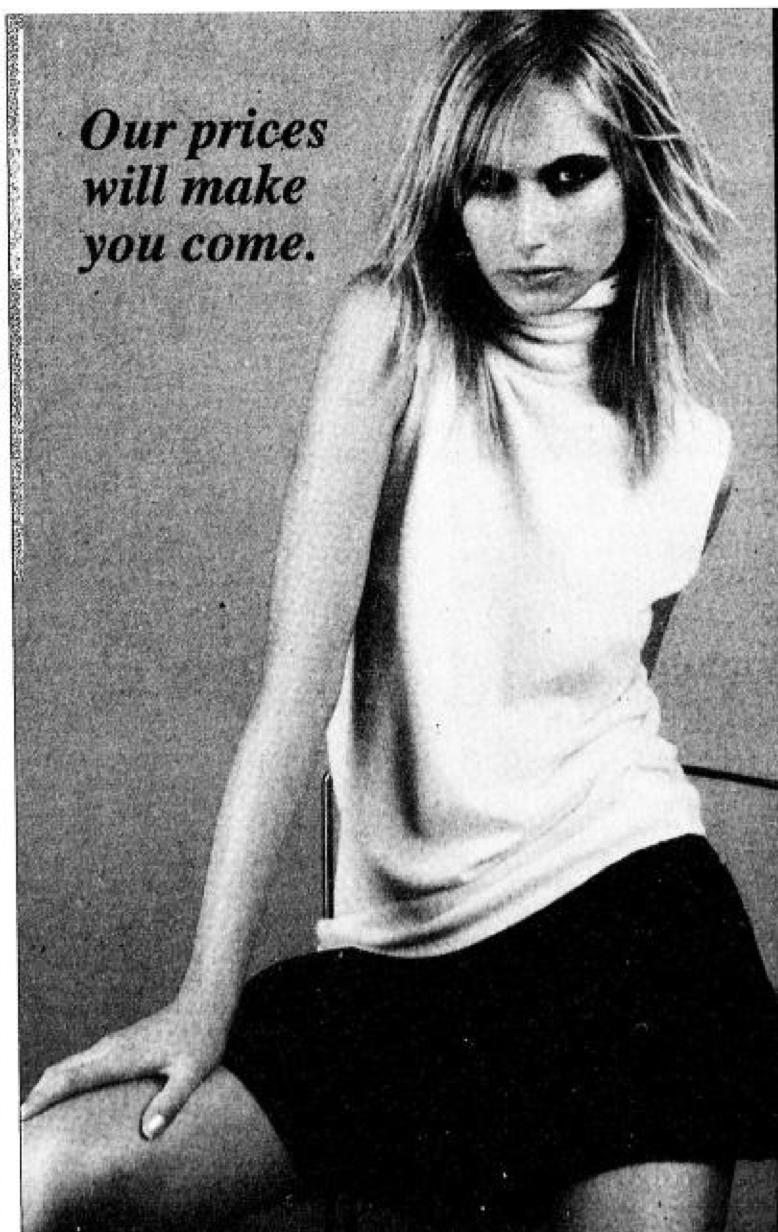
The DAR and the PCA, on the other hand, agreed to facilitate the immediate implementation of a support services program needed to develop coconut lands given to farmer-beneficiaries and leaseholders.

Braganza said DAR would secure the cooperation of local police units to "avert or neutralize" armed resistance by landowners during and after distribution of the coconut lands to CARP beneficiaries.

There are about 3 million hectares of agricultural land considered as coconut areas in 68 provinces. This represents about 27 percent of the country's total agricultural land.

Records from the PCA show that coconut remains the country's top agricultural export, giving the country an average of $774 million or P38 billion in yearly export revenue.

But the ordinary Filipino coconut farmer earns only an average of P10,000 per hectare annually or about P835 a month.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Fund lack hounds planned shrine of Ilonggo patriot

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Iloilo City

LOPEZ JAENA

THE STRUGGLE to give due recognition to the Ilonggo patriot, Dr. Graciano Lopez Jaena, continues.

A century after his death, believers of Lopez Jaena lament that he has not been as popular as his contemporaries despite efforts to popularize his writings and speeches, especially among younger generations.

In his book, "Mightier than the Sword," historian and former Iloilo Vice Gov. Demy Sonza said Lopez Jaena deserved as much credit as Jose Rizal and Marcelo del Pilar as part of the "great triumvirate of the Propaganda Movement."

"It is both sad and strange that the first Filipino to set out on the Propaganda Campaign for his country's freedom has found very few among his countrymen who have been interested in perpetuating his memory and popularizing his name," said Sonza.

Sonza, along with about 30 writers, musicians, professionals, descendants of the Lopez Jaena and academicians formed the Dr. Graciano Lopez Jaena Foundation Inc. on Dec. 8, 1993 to perpetuate the ideals of the Ilonggo hero.

Last year, the foundation started a fund-raising campaign for the construction of a Lopez Jaena shrine that would also serve as a museum, library and gallery of memorabilia of Lopez Jaena and other heroes and revolutionaries from Western Visayas.

The shrine would be constructed on a lot along Fajardo Street in Iloilo City's Jaro District where the Lopez Jaena family house once stood. The house was abandoned during the Spanish colonial period after most of the family members left for Negros Occidental to evade persecution by the authorities.

The 450-square-meter property has been donated by the Javellosa family to the foundation, but the latter has to shoulder nearly P1 million in bank arrears. On top of that, it needs to raise P9 million for the construction of the two-story shrine.

Lukewarm

According to a plan drafted by architect Nilo Moralidad, the ground floor will house the exhibit area, boardroom and administrative office. There will also be spaces to be leased to help raise funds for the maintenance of the building.

The construction of the shrine has been hampered by the lukewarm response to the fund-raising drive, even from some of Lopez Jaena's *kasimanwa* (provincemates).

Mario Salazar, the foundation's president, said the amount raised so far was not even enough to pay for the site of the proposed shrine.

"Many of those we had approached expressed support for the project but failed to give financial assistance," said Salazar.

On Dec. 18 last year, the foundation sponsored a fund-raising dinner dubbed "An Evening of Patriotism and Greatness" for the construction of the shrine in commemoration of Lopez Jaena's 146th birth anniversary. A pledging session followed the dinner that cost P5,000 for two persons at the Barcelo Sarabia Manor Hotel.

The activity raised only about P200,000 from the about 120 guests. "This is quite small, not even enough to pay for the lot," said Salazar, although he said they received more pledges for the project.

Feared orator

Born on Dec. 18, 1856 to Placido Lopez and Maria Jacoba Jaena, Graciano studied at the St. Vincent Seminary before working at the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Manila.

In 1879, he went to Spain where he studied medicine at the University of Valencia but was drawn to politics and journalism.

After three years, he met Rizal in Madrid, Spain and worked together in the Propaganda Movement.

As founder of the "La Solidaridad", the movement's publication, Lopez Jaena was well known for his writings espousing freedom for his country.

He died of tuberculosis on Jan. 20, 1896 in a hospital run by the Sisters of Charity in Barcelona after poverty and doing menial jobs took a toll on his health.

He was buried in an unmarked grave in a public cemetery in Barcelona. His remains could not be located until now.

The proposed shrine would have been a fitting tribute for the sacrifices he made for the country.

Ilonggo writer hurdles language, life barriers

By Hazel P. Villa
Iloilo City

A SHY 18-year-old from Iloilo went to Bacolod City to look for work and ended up as a maid in the home of a rich man.

Not long after, the 42-year-old rich man impregnated the young lass and hid her in the house of one of his workers. Three days after giving birth on Feb. 18, 1981, the woman abandoned her infant son, never to accept him as her own again.

More than two decades later, the boy has yet to feel the love and support of his biological parents who have moved on to live their own lives, as if he was of no consequence.

His search for his parents' love drove Winton Lou Ynion to be one of the youngest and accomplished Ilonggos to write in Filipino, a language Ilonggos are not exactly experts at.

"I'm happy with my life, no regrets," said Ynion, now 21, even after recounting the sad beginnings of his life.

Ynion is the first Ilonggo and non-Tagalog to win the grand prize of the 2001 Gantimpalang Collantes-Gawad Surian sa Sanaysay of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Collantes Prize-Surian Award for Essay of the Commission on Filipino Language) for his piece, "Filipino para sa Pilipino."

He beat veteran Tagalog writers and professors from reputable universities.

When he was 20, Ynion placed second to professional Filipino writer Eugene Evasco in the 2001 Gawad Komisyon sa Tula para sa mga Beteranong Makata (Commission Award in Poetry for Veteran Poets). On third place was perennial Palanca awardee Rebecca Añonuevo.

Ynion, a cum laude graduate of the West Visayas State University's College of Education in 2000, has no qualms about telling people that his drive for excellence in the field of writing comes from his desire for acceptance, an offshoot of the sad circumstances of his birth.

First meeting

Ynion was 14 years old when he first met his father on Dec. 31, 1995 at the house of his father's brother in the Locsin Subdivision in Iloilo City's Jaro District. He had wanted to ask for support for his schooling.

But Ynion said his father, owner of a shipping line and a marine review center, simply asked, "How are you?" and then gave him P500 as well as his telephone number.

They didn't talk much. In January 1996, they met again and he was given a little money. They have lost contact with each other since then, and the support never came.

WINTON Lou Ynion with his mom Inday outside their *sari-sari* store and residence on Tanza Street, Iloilo City.
JOHN MICHAEL P. AVELINO

Ynion, who carries his father's surname, was four years old and was sick with measles when his mother visited him. The last time they saw each other was when he was in Grade 4. He remembers her only for her "indifference."

He said he heard his mother is now married and lives in Pavia town, Iloilo.

The only person whom Ynion can call "family" is Teresita Sacmar, 50, an unmarried half-sister of Ramon Amarador, the worker entrusted with Ynion when his biological mother left him.

As surrogate mother, Teresita brought Ynion to Barangay Tanza in Molo District in Iloilo City. The boy grew up studying and selling vegetables with his "Mommy Inday" at a small market stall in Tanza.

Show of approval

Even from Teresita, who lives simply, Ynion did not receive any outright words of appreciation despite his graduating valedictorian from the Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School and later at the University of the Philippines High School in Iloilo City.

Rather, she gave him all the money he needed for books and projects from the meager sales of vegetables at the market and borrowings from friends and neighbors.

"Mommy Inday's deep concern for me is probably one of the reasons I have this drive to please her," said Winton, who can never thank the heavens enough for this kind woman.

Ynion himself even joined gay beauty contests just to put food on the table and to support his schooling.

"Mother and son" are living in a small shanty that also serves as a *sari-sari* store at 217 Tanza St.

"We are always praying it won't rain because water drips from the holes in the roof and we can't move freely because we are afraid that the house might just fall apart," said Winton, who teaches part time at the regional Philippine Science High School in Barangay Bitoon in Jaro.

WINTON now an accomplished writer in Filipino.
JOHN MICHAEL P. AVELINO

Ynion hasn't graduated yet from the school of hard knocks. He uses concrete images of his own life to write poetry and scathing commentaries on inequality—and in Filipino at that.

Last year, his piece on "Pagigkas ng Kabansa(g)an: Mga Bugso ng Protesta ng Lipunan at Kasaysayan sa mga Ugat ni 'Impeng Negro' (Freeing Nationalism: The Surges of Protest of Society and History in the Veins of 'Impen the Negro')," which analyzed discrimination, won first honorable mention in the Gawad Komisyon sa Panunuring Pampanitikan (Commission Award for Literary Criticism).

Prof. Amalia Lorilla, Ynion's Filipino teacher at UP High, called his attention to his writing talent when he was still a freshman.

That started the love for writing of one who believes that "the pen remains the mightiest sword." He read Filipino classic works day and night to hone his talent.

In college at the WVSU, he became editor-in-chief of *Silak*, the college paper, and vice chair of the Student Council, among other many responsibilities.

Drive to achieve

What really fired his ambitions in life was the Ayala Young Leaders Congress in February 2000, sponsored by the Ayala Group of Companies.

Ynion was with the batch of young blind achiever Roselle Ambubuyog of the Ateneo de Manila University and his exposure to other young people, both privileged and disadvantaged, shaped his outlook that nothing was impossible and that "I can be the best that I can be."

Ayala also provided Ynion with a P10,000 grant for his masteral thesis and P2,000 for his comprehensive exams. He is due to graduate this March, one of the youngest masteral graduates in the history of the WVSU.

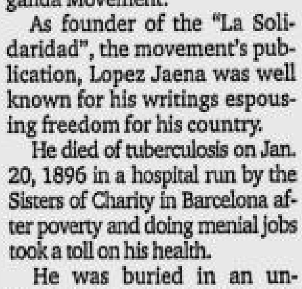
For the meantime, all he wants is to get a scholarship for doctoral studies in a reputable Manila university or a book project so he can have more opportunities to write.

"This way, people will hear my voice, which mirrors life itself," said Ynion.

As for his biological parents, he said: "I'm already tired of expecting to be acknowledged by them. For me, they are both dead even though I told my father once that I'll be the first to take care of him when he is old and sick."

New year, old issues

BACOLOD EXCHANGE
Ninfa R. Leonarda



THE NEW YEAR'S eve revelry toll from firecracker accidents was said to have gone down in most other parts of the country, but it still went up in Negros Occidental. Perhaps it was because the province had many manufacturers of pyrotechnics and even had what was referred to as a firecracker village in one of its towns.

That was probably why local hospitals still saw a lot of bloodied victims, some with hands, fingers and even parts of their faces blasted off. Still, downtown pyrotechnic vendors complained of poor sales, even before the New Year. Thankfully, however, Christmas Day was relatively quiet and peaceful compared to previous years.

If the sale of firecrackers had gone down, it was different for the retailers of Christmas lights who made about hundreds of thousands—maybe even a million—of pesos in sales.

Part of the demand came from the various towns and cities of the province, which had joined what the Capitol called a "Tour of Lights" contest in two categories.

Because of the promotion of the local media, "touring" the province from north to south became the thing for entire families who traveled all over at night to gaze at the wondrous arrangements of lights devised by local officials, with the help of town or city-based artists.

Bacolod City, although concededly the number one local government unit on the island, did not participate in the contest. Local wags quipped that it was because its officials did not want to use up more electricity, considering that it had already suffered disconnection from the local electric company for unpaid bills amounting to P49 million.

But that didn't seem to be the reason because the public plaza was full of lights as all the trees were covered with them. The only difference was there was no unified design, no apparent motif, with the various kinds of lights strung helter-skelter.

A *balikbayan*, who went through the provincial tour, said it all by commenting that of all the public plazas she had seen, Bacolod's was "the most pathetic."

* * *

Well, the New Year had settled in, but the first day of work still found Bacolod officials at odds with each other, with the city council led by Vice Mayor Ramiro Garcia Jr. on one hand, and Mayor Luzviminda Valdez on the other.

As in the year past, one of the bones of contention was still the casual workers issue, with the council continuing to question what they considered the overhiring of the workers, even without adequate appropriations.

Then, too, as of this writing, they were still wrangling over the city budget that had yet to be approved because the council had questioned some of the items proposed by the mayor.

Thursday was supposed to be session day, but statements, announcements and denials were still flying around at City Hall up to Wednesday. Peace and goodwill can still not be expected to reign there, obviously.

* * *

IN THE meantime, the province is immersed in the illegal logging case that has been filed against the mayor and several other officials of Salvador Benedicto town. The mayor of Hinoba-an town has also been charged by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

In the case of SB Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz, she has charged back at the DENR officials for alleged anomalies, particularly in their issuances of permits that had enabled loggers to cut down even natural grown trees.

So far, preliminary hearings have been called, with the lawyers of both parties providing entertainment, both with their antics and their colorful statements. They, too, are threatening each other with charges that include administrative ones as well as disbarment.

The case of Hinoba-an Mayor Francisco Bilbao is also taking twists and turns, with some members of his family getting into the act.

A nephew has also filed charges against the mayor, while a grandniece has slammed her own parent in defense of the mayor.

* * *

IN THE north, where the big event before the year ended was the wedding of Rep. Jules Ledesma and movie star Assunta de Rossi, the new year came in with the issue of the mayoral contest in the town of EB Magalona still unresolved.

Although the Commission on Elections had ruled that Alfonso Gamboa was the winner and had ordered his proclamation, the local office had not done so, saying his opponent, Reynaldo Depasucat, had filed a motion for reconsideration.

* * *

Eyebrows in Bacolod rose with the announcement that former Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza has been appointed press secretary.

Loren's fashion irks Ping

From page A1

(Why are you trying to annoy me?)"

"I was scared, I had no idea what he was talking about," Legarda laughingly recalled.

Still stern and unsmiling, Lacson pointed to her dress: a cheongsam. Was Legarda trying to harass him by wearing the Chinese dress now famously associated with Mary Ong, alias Rosebud, Lacson's perennial tormentor?

Then, it hit her. Lacson was actually cracking a joke. And she laughed out loud, the ice between them now broken.

Sen. Juan Flavier, Legarda's seatmate and one of those closest to her, had come to the lady senator's defense. He had listened to the exchange and told Lacson that even before Rosebud took to wearing the cheongsam as a uniform while she was a star witness during the blue ribbon committee hearings on the alleged criminal activities committed by the officers and men of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force which Lacson once headed, Legarda was already wearing the Chinese garb during the Senate impeachment trial.

Raves

The good-looking senator drew raves during the impeachment trial of then President Estrada for her sharp and penetrating questions directed at the witnesses. She also stole the show with her stylish clothes and Pashmina shawls.

No doubt, it was her performance during the trial that gave her enough clout to be majority leader, the most powerful post in the Senate next to the Senate presidency.

Lacson's joke-is-on-me may have been his way to get on Legarda's good side.

Through emissaries, Lacson reportedly had asked Legarda's people for her to be his running mate in 2004.

Shoo-in for VP

Lacson was the first to declare his intention to run in the presidential elections, before President Macapagal-Arroyo altered the political landscape by declaring that she's bowing out of the presidential race to focus on the economy.

Legarda reportedly made no commitment to Lacson or to any of several other "presidentiables" who are courting her.

The former broadcaster who topped the senatorial elections is deemed to be a shoo-in for Vice President.

But Legarda said this does not mean she is "available to every candidate. But I listen."

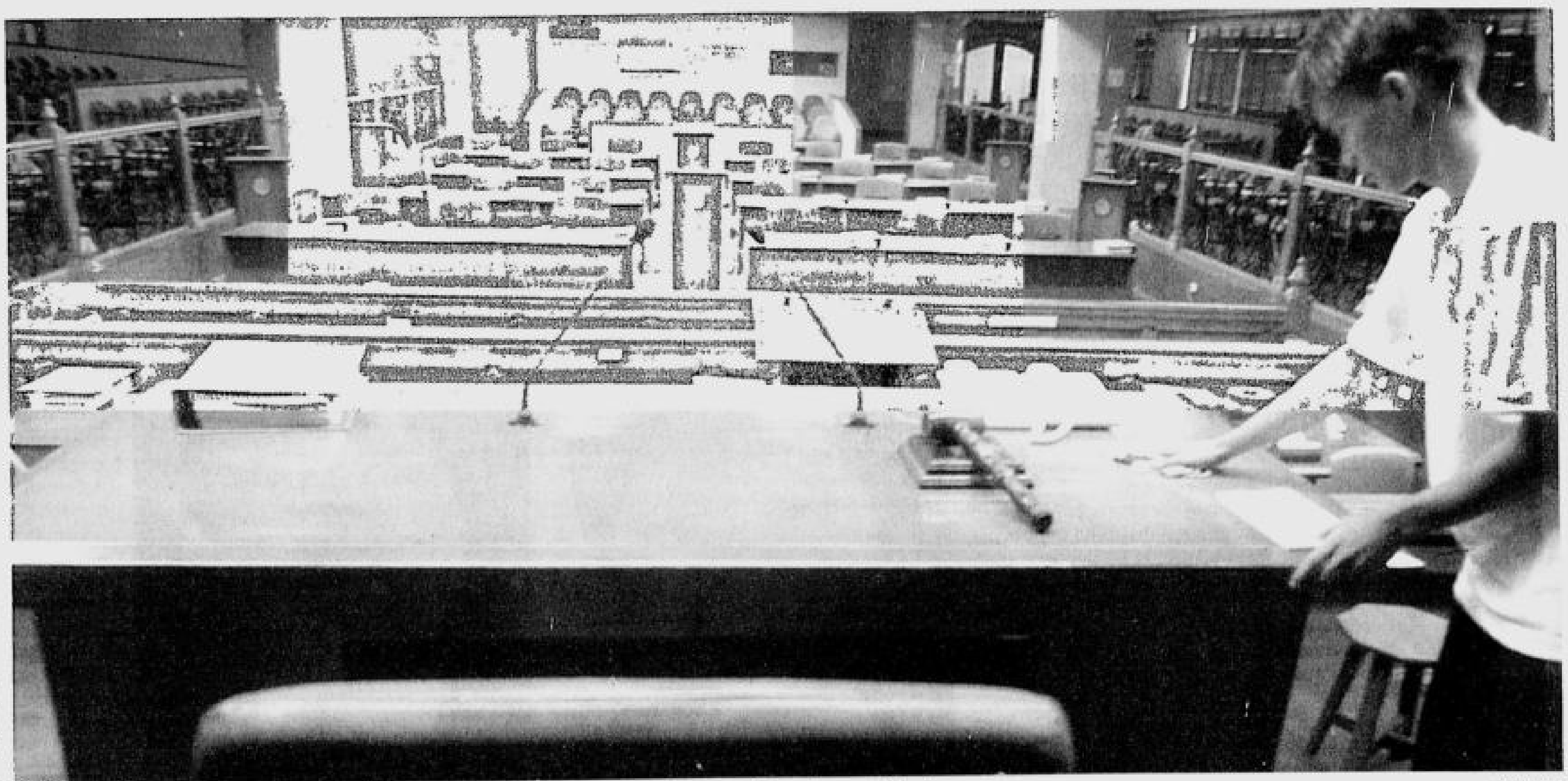
"It's difficult to commit to anyone this early, in the first place I don't know what office I would be running for," she said. She said she can neither commit nor close the door to anyone at this point.

But she confirmed that there were "initiatives from some groups" to tap her as candidate.

Legarda was looking at three options: reelection, the Vice Presidency and the "very remote possibility" of seeking the presidency.

Legarda admitted that she and other Lakas senators gained from the President's withdrawal from the 2004 presidential race.

She said that when the President had not renounced her candidacy, she (Legarda) was "locked in" in her own party Lakas.



CLEANING up before a sticky situation develops in the Senate when it resumes regular sessions on Monday.

JESS YUSON

Angara's Senate coup loses steam

From page A1

on the supposed coup attempt. "We discussed how this thing came up," he said. "The first time we heard of it was through rumors from the press. There was a newspaper headline [not the INQUIRER] about it."

While they are on opposite sides of the political fence, Drilon and Angara are known to maintain a close friendship that started in their days at Angara's Accra law firm.

Legarda said Thursday night that Drilon "seemed unperturbed" by talk that Angara would be installed Senate president at the resumption of sessions on Monday.

She expressed confidence that the Senate majority would stay.

"We still have the numbers. The same—13," she said, adding that the majority had made a "head count" of its members.

But Sen. Joker Arroyo aired a warning to the President about the opposition's supposed attempt to "exact a high price for cooperation" by seeking the Senate leadership or, failing that, wresting control of vital committees.

"What the opposition meant with unity and cooperation is actually a tongue-in-cheek approach," he told the INQUIRER.

Arroyo cautioned Ms Macapagal against "playing footsies with the opposition while disregarding and taking for granted the sensibilities of those who have been loyal to her."

"That is subtle corruption," he said.

2 accounts

Ms Macapagal met with the administration senators amid talk that she had offered Angara the presidency of the Senate in exchange for his clearing the way in the chamber for Charter change and eventual shift in the form of government to the parliamentary system.

Sources said she called and conferred with seven administration senators Thursday afternoon in Malacañang, after the *vin d'honneur* reception for diplomats. The meeting reportedly lasted from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Those present were Drilon, Legarda, Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, and Senators Ralph Recto, Ramon Magsaysay, Robert Barbers and Ramon Revilla.

It was unclear why the other majority senators were not present.

By one account, the senators "confronted" the President about what she allegedly promised Angara at a meeting Tuesday.

But in another account, it was Ms Macapagal who "volunteered the assurance to disabuse majority senators of rumors that Angara is set to take over the Senate presidency."

According to the first version of the meeting, the senators also raised the issue of Charter change and asked the President to make a categorical opposition to moves to amend the 1987 Constitution.

"They told her Cha-cha is divisive," a source said.

To which the President reportedly said that she would remain neutral because she could not afford to shoot down outright initiatives in the House of Representatives.

She also reportedly said that if she blocked moves by congressmen to amend the Constitution, she risked antagonizing those on whom she was depending for the passage of priority measures, particularly economic bills.

But in the other version of the meeting, Charter change was not discussed.

According to this account, the meeting was principally called by Ms Macapagal to discuss pending legislation including, among others, securitization, indexation of "sin" taxes and the proposed national budget for 2003.

'Paano naman kami?'

In the first version, the President was met with questions concerning Angara that could be summed up thus: "Ma'am, *paano naman kami* (what about us)?"

She reportedly pointed out that it was Angara who had sought the Tuesday meeting, wherein he pledged support for her legislative agenda.

If there was anything she promised in return, "it was regarding the parceling of Cabinet positions based on the individual competencies of members of his group," a source said, adding:

"There was no quid pro quo on Cha-cha, and the cooperation that the President promised Angara was with respect only to Cabinet positions."

Drilon said at his press conference that he and the majority senators met with Ms Macapagal to discuss the legislative agenda that she outlined yesterday at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

He said he reported to the President and to the other administration senators the result of his meeting with the Makati Business Club, which had expressed its desired agenda for the remainder of Ms Macapagal's term.

"I am hopeful that with the manifest cooperation that the LDP has made public, we would be able to work fast on these vital measures that the President mentioned in her speech [at the PSE]," Drilon said. "I hope the LDP will now put its heart into the agenda that we have and help us push the measures that the people need."

But Arroyo said the opposition was taking advantage of the President's gesture of seeking unity and cooperation "by making demands" such as the Senate leadership.

Now that the supposed coup attempt has been shot down with proclamations from opposition senators that they will continue to support Drilon, the Angara camp will be "targeting the Senate committees," Arroyo said.

Divided

The opposition senators appear to be divided on the issues of Charter change before 2004 and the possible postponement of the 2004 elections.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who has hinted more than once of a change in the Senate leadership on Monday, yesterday said he "could not agree with the proposition that there should be no elections in 2004."

However, Pimentel said, everything would depend on the briefing that Angara was expected to give his colleagues late yesterday or today.

"It's important that Angara [brief us] because he is the only one who had the chance to talk to the President," Pimentel said. "I think we deserve to be briefed on the nature of their conversation." *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

House can't stop music for Cha-cha

From page A1

would convene the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council on Jan. 14 but not to talk about Charter change. She said she did not want people to "misunderstand" her decision not to run in the 2004 elections.

Gonzalez said the statement was only consistent with the President's "neutral stance" on Charter change.

He said it was "not good for the President to influence" legislators on the matter, especially since the House launched the initiative after its committee on constitutional amendments conducted nationwide public consultations and ostensibly found that there was a clamor for amendments to the Charter.

He also noted the strong support from local officials as expressed by the League of Municipalities and the League of Cities, the two organizations to which all city and municipal mayors nationwide belong.

Gonzalez said Ms Macapagal should be oblivious to current speculations that she would be benefited by Charter change.

"We cannot stop people from speculating," the Iloilo City representative said, citing Sen. Joker Arroyo's "wild imagination" that the President, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Sen. Edgardo Angara were conspiring for the amendment of the Constitution and the shift to a parliamentary form of government.

Gonzalez dismissed the criticism aired by some senators that House members were being irresponsible for pushing Charter change at this time.

"The senators are afraid of losing their seats," he said. "That is the real reason they are opposing [it]. And that is a stronger motive than [what] they are [accusing congressmen of]."

Gonzalez said the House could not be accused of irresponsibility considering that it had already passed the bills Malacañang had certified.

"[Charter change] is part of the agenda of the House because we have cleared our desks of all important legislation except those that are pending in the bicameral conference committees," he said. "It is the senators who are irresponsible, with their endless filibustering and using valuable time in investigating everything that happens in the country."

Gonzalez said it would probably be easier for House Resolution No. 16 to pass in the Senate if Angara would take over the chamber's leadership, as had been rumored in the past few days.

"Senator Angara is for Charter change, so there will be a scenario there different from a Senate president [Franklin Drilon] using his moral suasion and colluding with the majority leader [Loren Legarda, against it]," Gonzalez added.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, one of the few House members opposing Charter change, praised the President for her remark and urged other congressmen to take heed.

But opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel raised the need for Ms Macapagal to take a "definitive stand" and "provide the direction" on the issue.

"It is important that leadership be provided to this nation, especially on a matter that is fundamental and very important, like changing the Constitution," he said.

Pimentel said the President "cannot straddle the fence as if she has no position on an issue that will affect the lives and the fortunes and fates of the entire country and people for the next several years."

"Being neutral can be interpreted as politicking of the basic order because politicians who do not wish to confront issues frontally usually say, 'I do not have any stand on that yet,'" he added.

The President's neutral stance has already drawn flak from Sen. Joker Arroyo.

He said Thursday that in staying neutral, the President was in effect "encouraging" Charter change "because she will be its direct beneficiary without running" in the 2004 elections. *With a report from Rocky Nazareno*

No talks yet for revised Piatco deal

From page A1

said his firm had written the Macapagal administration twice, urging it to convene a panel to renegotiate the contracts.

"Until now, the (Palace) had not responded to the letters, or initiate steps toward arbitration," Tolentino.

Angara, who chairs the Senate committee on constitutional amendments and revision of codes and laws and electoral reforms, which has already rendered a report on the Piatco contract, said there was "no sovereign guarantee" provision either in the original concession agreement or in the amended and restated concession agreement (Arca).

Angara recently released the report after "hearing and studying the various issues surrounding the Piatco controversy, especially the validity of the contract and the claims that the build-operate-transfer project was vested with a state guarantee."

"The use of arbitration as a viable mode of settling contractual disputes is specially cited in the Arca of the government's contract with Piatco," he said.

Angara said that even the intra-corporate controversies involving the shareholders of Piatco "should also be settled via arbitration."

"The government should not meddle or take sides in the shareholders' disputes," Angara stressed.

Hard-line stance

The failure of the mediation process has prompted Piatco to assume its hard-line stance.

Beating the deadline imposed by the high court, Piatco submitted on Thursday its final pleading, which asserted its legal rights to operate the state-of-the-art airport terminal.

In the memorandum, Piatco counsel asked the court to junk the consolidated petitions asking for the nullity of the Piatco contracts.

Piatco counsel Francisco Chavez said the high court should junk the petitions altogether because it had no jurisdiction over the petitions.

Chavez argued that the high court was not a trier of facts, but of laws.

"There is a question of fact when the doubt arises as to the truth or the falsity of alleged facts," he said.

"In the consolidated cases at bench, many allegations of facts are disputed. Without a definitive determination of the true facts, the proper application of the law cannot be made," Chavez, a former solicitor general, said.

Unprepared?

The government appeared unprepared to rebut Piatco's final arguments.

Instead of submitting its final pleading to the court on Thursday, Assistant Solicitor General Magdangal De Leon filed a two-page motion for extension of time to file the memorandum.

"Because of the intervening holidays and lack of documents to be attached to the memorandum of public respondents, said pleading may not be filed on or before its due date. An extension of five days from Jan. 9, 2003, or until Jan. 14, 2003, is hereby requested," De Leon said.

Besides the office of Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo, the Manila International Airport Services Groundhandling Corp. and its other concessionaires, also asked for a five-day extension.

Four separate petitions had sought to nullify the contracts for being allegedly onerous and unconstitutional.

Arbitration process

But Chavez reiterated Piatco's position that any dispute over the contracts "must undergo arbitration as a condition precedent" as mandated under the draft Concession Agreement (CA), the CA and the Arca.

"Where an agreement to arbitrate exists, jurisprudence holds that no court case can proceed," he said.

Chavez pointed out that following the encouragement of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. during the oral argument on Dec. 10 and pursuant to the Arca, Piatco wrote the DOTC and MIAA on Dec. 16 and 26 "to negotiate and appoint an expert neutral evaluator" to resolve their dispute.

In a statement, Angara said the Naia 3 contract was not backed by a sovereign guarantee, as its critics have alleged.

In a statement, Angara said his committee has clarified that what is contained in the contract "is the usual provision in which the government is obliged to pay Piatco for its expenses in case of a government takeover."

"Such provision, a routine feature of BOT contracts, does not constitute sovereign guarantee," Angara said.

FOUR DIGIT
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(In exact order)

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Macapagal names De Luna PSC commissioner

GMA'S new thrust for changes has extended to sports. She has sacked friend and classmate Cynthia Carrion from the Philippine Sports Commission.

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PRESIDENT Arroyo has replaced Cynthia Carrion as commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission and named lawyer Ambrosio De Luna to take her slot in the sports agency.

In an appointment letter obtained from Malacañang dated Jan. 3, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo informed PSC chair Eric Buhain of the change effective immediately.

The move surprised Buhain and some of his commissioners because De Luna wasn't even included in the roster of candidates composed mostly of politicians and former athletes or sports personalities.

Nevertheless, Buhain welcomed the appointment and said De Luna will be a big help to the agency in terms of legal matters.

De Luna, according to Buhain, came from the private sector, having worked with Fil-Estate as a corporate lawyer dealing with the firm's golf course development.

The new commissioner, who avidly plays golf, also worked as lawyer for the Special Olympics which involved mentally handicapped athletes.

MACAPAGAL

CARRION

"It's a good news to us," said Buhain, who admitted that he knew De Luna and already met him several times.

Buhain said De Luna will take care of the legal aspect of the commission, which usually deals with the law particularly when obtaining funds.

Carrion served for almost two years, championing the interest of women in sports.

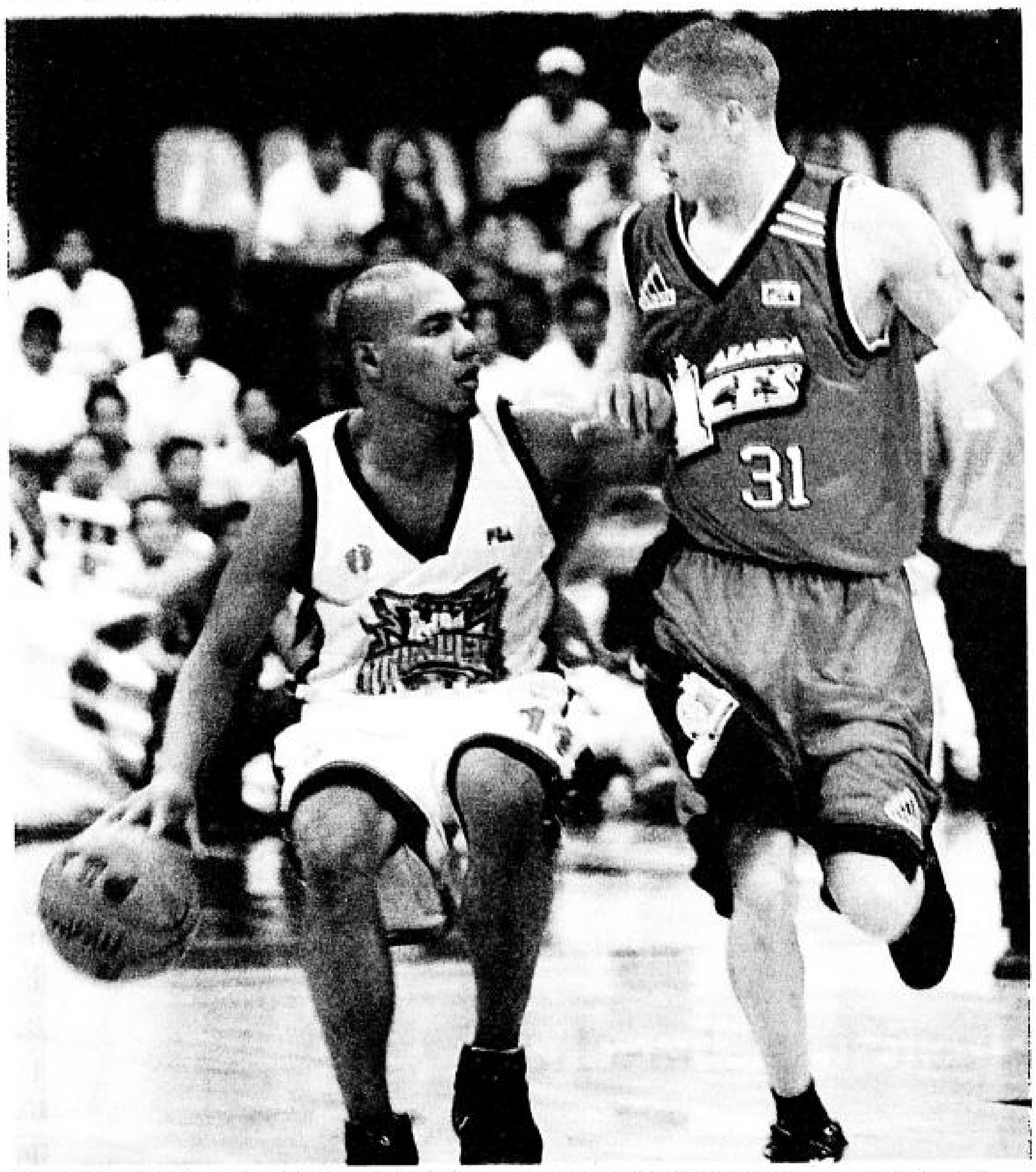
However, her stint was marked by disagreement with Buhain and her fellow commissioners regarding certain issues in the commission.

Commissioner Butch Ramirez said he was stunned by the news and only learned about it yesterday morning.

Ramirez added that he haven't heard of De Luna's name although Buhain has mentioned it several times before.

"Considering that the appointment was made Jan. 2 yet, we were caught by surprise," said Ramirez. "Anyway, I'm sure the President is making the right decision by appointing commissioner De Luna. And we will support him all the way."

The other commissioners, named last year, are Mike Barredo, who takes charge of the sports for the differently abled, and Leon Montemayor, who mainly deals with sports development in Mindanao.


PBA MVP Willie Miller of Red Bull (left) tries to dribble past John Arigo in this winning photo of August dela Cruz. Miller was honored as best pro cager during the PSA Awards ceremonies last night.

Palaro needs budget–Buhain

THERE'S an urgent need for the Palarong Pambansa to have a line budget, according to Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain.

Baring that the PSC scrounged for funds in the last three staging of the Palaro, Buhain yesterday said he will try to convince both the Senate and the House of Representatives to give a line budget for the annual event.

In this regard, Buhain met with Lanao del Norte Rep. Abdullah Dimaporo recently to draft the request addressed to the House Budget Management Committee under Nonoy Andaya.

"I'm sure they will understand that when the Department of Education transferred the Palaro functions to us, the sports budget wasn't included," Buhain said.

In more than 30 years that the DepEd runs the Palaro, it has a regular source of funds, he added. "But for the past three years, we have been getting out funds from several sources."

"There is a need to have a line function which will ensure that there will be Palaro every year," added Buhain.

This year's Palaro will be held in Tubod, Lanao del Norte at the newly built Mindanao Civic Center through the efforts of Rep. Dimaporo and wife, Gov. Imelda Quibranza-Dimaporo.

"The Dimaporos have been coordinating closely with the PSC regarding the Palaro staging, which is important in the country's calendar of sport development programs," Buhain added.

The PSC chief said that in this year's edition, he hopes to get the local government units to be actively involved in the preparations of the student-athletes.

"We agreed to have it more like a provincial Palaro which would be easier to organize since the LGU's will be the ones taking charge," said Buhain.

A Palaro based in the provinces will also be more practical compared to the region-based because delegations will have manageable numbers, according to Buhain.

"It would also be synchronized with the Batang Pinoy and national games concept which are also integral parts in the pyramidal sports development scheme," he said.

Challenge Cup visits Lucena

GAMES TODAY *(Quezon Convention Center)*
2 p.m.—Sunkist vs ICTSI
4 p.m.—Welcoat vs Dazz

DAZZ Dishwashing seeks a crucial win over pacesetter Welcoat Paints today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City.

Gametime is set at 4 p.m. ICTSI-La Salle, already assured of a playoff seat for the fourth and last semis seat, tackles Sunkist in the 2 p.m. curtain-raiser.

The Paintmasters (9-1) allowed Rommel Adducul, Eddie Laure, Ariel Capus and Ronald Tubid the luxury of attending the PBA rookie draft camp yesterday. But coach Leo Austria's charges remain favored to repeat their 86-75 victory over the Greasebusters last Nov. 17.

"We're all out to win this one," said Austria, who hails from the neighboring town of Sariaya.

Dennis U. Eroa

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Miami vs Utah, 10 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), ESPN, Milwaukee vs Chicago, 9:30 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Solar Sports
NBA Inside Stuff, 3:30 p.m. (r) Star Sports
TENNIS: ATP Tata Open, 4 p.m. (r), Star Sports
AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Super Bowl VI Highlights, 2 p.m., ESPN
TRIATHLON: Hainan Discovery Triathlon, 8 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. (r), Star Sports
BOWLING: CGU Asian Bowling Tour, 1 p.m. (r), ESPN
SOCCER: Spanish League Highlights, 7 a.m. (r), Star Sports
Futbol Mundial, 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. (r), Star Sports
Here We Go!, 8 a.m. (r - 12:30 p.m.), ESPN
ICE SKATING: Trophee Lalique 2002, 9 a.m., ESPN
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

PBA board approves 2-conference, 1-inv'l format

By June Navarro

LIVING up to its promise of relaunching the PBA beginning this season, the league's Board of Governors yesterday approved the two-conference, one-invitational tournament format, replacing the traditional three-conference schedule of the oldest professional basketball institution in the land.

The 2003 PBA season will touch off on Feb. 16 featuring the prestigious All Filipino Cup, where the 10 teams are guaranteed to see action in 18 elimination games before the playoffs.

The All Filipino Cup will run until the second week of July or roughly five months, giving the teams more leverage as far as television exposure is concerned.

In the past, four months are long enough to stage an entire conference.

"I'm happy with the response of the board. Their support to what I hope will be a transition year is so important for the relaunching of the PBA," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala.

Barely two weeks after the All Filipino Cup, the Asian Invitationals will be launched into orbit. The top five teams in the All Filipino will advance in the invitationals while the rest will fight for the last remaining slot.

Eala said the PBA has already sounded off the professional leagues in Japan and South Korea, the two nations invited to pit skills with the six PBA teams in a single-round robin format.

"We have already sent feelers to the leagues in Japan and South Korea about this. Right now, we're communicating about their schedule," said Eala.

Right after the Asian Invitationals, the import-flavored conference will cap the season with the 10 squads proposed to be subjected to handicapping with respect to the acquisition of imports.

The import-seasoned conference has no format yet.

"We're studying the format of the import conference because right now we are seriously considering the handicapping system," said Eala.

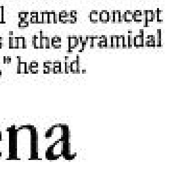
The idea is to grant lower-ranked teams after the All Filipino and Asian Invitationals the leeway to acquire an import more imposing and skillfull than most of the teams in the upper bracket.

On rules, the PBA board approved the introduction of the eight-second time line in a move to make the game faster while scrapping the outdated illegal defense from the league rule books.

"This was the transition that I wanted. Ultimately, the long-term goal is a one-championship season but we have to study it properly. It's not only about institutionalizing the idea of a one-championship tournament, there are also business implications to consider," said Eala.

Mayor Jolly R calls; New Year stunner from Rico A

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

THE BAD side in Mayor Jolly Resuello of San Carlos City (Pangasinan) is, he erupts so easily.

"I blacked out as I really felt I was done wrong," he said. "I've never felt so hurt in my life and when I finally met him, the world turned black."

He was referring to Orly Navarro, the hard-hitting broadcaster from Dagupan City. The mayor said he had been "unfairly criticized" on air by Orly.

The mayor called me up the day after I wrote about an incident in which he had allegedly threatened to kill Orly. Jolly said he was called by Orly as a jueteng supporter.

"I cannot in conscience accept that," said Jolly.

The good side in Jolly is, he knows how to quickly check his temper. He also knows how to acknowledge his mistake in no time.

"I have already apologized to Orly," said the mayor, who was pictured as having harangued Orly—a gun tucked in his waist. "I know my action was uncalled for. There was no justification for that. I sincerely offered my apologies to Orly."

The mayor said he will never condone jueteng in his turf. To prove his point, he said he has urged Rep. Gener Tulagan in his district to initiate a probe on the alleged existence of jueteng in San Carlos City.

"I sincerely urge Congressman Tulagan to do that," the mayor said. "I'm sure even our Monsignor Cruz will welcome the investigation."

Any comment, my dear Gener?

■

Here's a letter from Lola Ma'am Cristina Ocampo-Ferrer, MSSW director/behaviorist of the School of the Holy Spirit in Las Piñas City:

"Dear Mr. Al,

"Norman Black is and will always be a professional---and a child of the Almighty. He will always submit to the will of Somebody higher. I was the one who conducted a two-day 'live-in' seminar for Pop Cola in 1999 when Black was having a difficult time with a 'prima donna.' (Censored).

"Sta. Lucia will have a coach suited to the times? The temperamental Chua? If he has mellowed after being junked too by his former team, let us see. Black is more objective than subjective (feelings) in treating players, more like Cone when he allowed Abarrientos to go (due to his ... censored again).

Cheers!"

■

In a New Year stunner, Rico Agcaoili, the amiable president of Baguio Country Club, sent me two CDs containing many of the hits of the Sixties. My, my, I am deeply overjoyed. Rico said the CDs were "put together by a friend and fraternity-sorority sister--Evelyn Ailing (married to Tito)--which will enable you to enjoy in your car and have the music of our time, the one played and sang by the Spirit of '67 as described in your column today."

Cheers, Rico. You are really one of a kind.

Tanpinco par in playoff keys RP junior golf win

JR Tanpinco scored a par in the first extra hole to beat South Korea's Son Hyeon Ho yesterday in the sudden death and power the Philippines' win in the sixth Samsung Philippine International Junior Golf Championship at the Wack Wack golf course.

It was a dramatic come-from-behind win for Tanpinco, who shot a 75 to force the tournament's first playoff after Son limped home with an 80 to wind up with identical 312 for 72 holes.

"This is a good day to celebrate my final year as a junior and it's even greater since I retained my title," said Tanpinco, 21. The special division is limited to players who are 18-21 years old.

Actually, it was a family celebration as Tanpinco's sister Anya, 19, also kept the girls' special division title after coming up with 74 to wind up with a 54-hole total of 237.

Jenz Tecson likewise carded a 77 to go with Tanpinco's 75 for 152 to enable the host country to clinch the team title with a three-day total of 459. Malaysia finished second with 464, followed by South Korea with 474.

Allan Miñoza and Holen Juan Superal were the other Filipinos to capture titles.

Superal sparkled with a 69 at the Wack Wack East course to win the Class D diadem 215, followed by Thailand's Jun Heo 76-231 and Ralph Waldo Salao of the Philippines 89-285.

Miñoza, the 16-year-old nephew of top pro Frankie, carded an 82 for 307 to capture the Class A crown, thanks to the tournament rule that no player can win two championships.

Actually, Singapore's Choo Tze Huang came up with 76 for 304 to win both the Class A and overall titles. But since he could not claim both, he settled for his second overall crown in a row.

"It's nice to win again," he said. Asked if he is coming back next year, he answered: "Most probably. It would be nice to make a hat trick."

Seventy-six players from the Philippines, South Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand competed in the event organized by Edgardo "Tito Boy" Cantada, the president of the Philippine Junior Golf Foundation.

The tourney began in 1998 with Samsung as the title sponsor.

Other backers were Cebu Pacific, Wilson Sports, Morelia Travel and Tours Inc., Herma Group of Companies, Pagcor, Mitsubishi Motors, Bingo Bonanza, Toyota Otis, Pisanti Golf, Philippine Flour Mills, Rizal Rep. Gilberto Duavit, Takanobu Taira, Airlift Asia Inc., Raul Jorge, Sysu International, Absolute Distilled Water, Gatorade and Edsa Shangri-La.

Els, Furyk share Mercedes lead

By Doug Ferguson
AP Golf Writer

KAPALUA, Hawaii—Jim Furyk felt right at home Thursday in the Mercedes Championships, where he polished off a 9-under 64 just 300 yards (meters) from his house and wound up in a share of the lead with South Africa's Ernie Els.

Only three players in the 36-man field of PGA Tour winners were over par. More than half of the field were in the 60s, and the average score–69.31– was the lowest for any round in the five years that the Mercedes has been played at Kapalua.

Furyk played 27 holes on the Plantation Course just two months ago, and he's the only person on the PGA Tour to have played in the season-opening Mercedes all five years since it moved to Kapalua.

"I know the course plenty well, whether I play here in the offseason or not," Furyk said of his home-field advantage.

He attributed his bogey-free 64 to an eagle on the par-5 ninth that kept him in the lead most of the day, and a great round of putting, including a 40-footer he made on the 17th hole.

Els also feels at home at Kapalua, one of his favorite stops.

He missed last year after failing to win on the tour for the first since 1994, but victories at Doral and the British Open brought him back. And the Big Easy looks intent on returning a lot more often. *AP*

Six-footer only basketball tourney slated

By Roy Luarca

AN ALL six-footer team in the Philippines? It's unheard of before, but not anymore.

Six teams, with no player standing below six feet and no one older than 18, are being formed to compete in the Alberto D. Lina Junior 6-foot and above Basketball Championship slated Jan. 28-Feb. 22.

The tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines and Air 21 will be participated in by selections from the UAAP, the NCAA, the National Capital Region Athletic Association, the Colleges and Universities Sports Association, Tong Lian and the RP Youth Team.

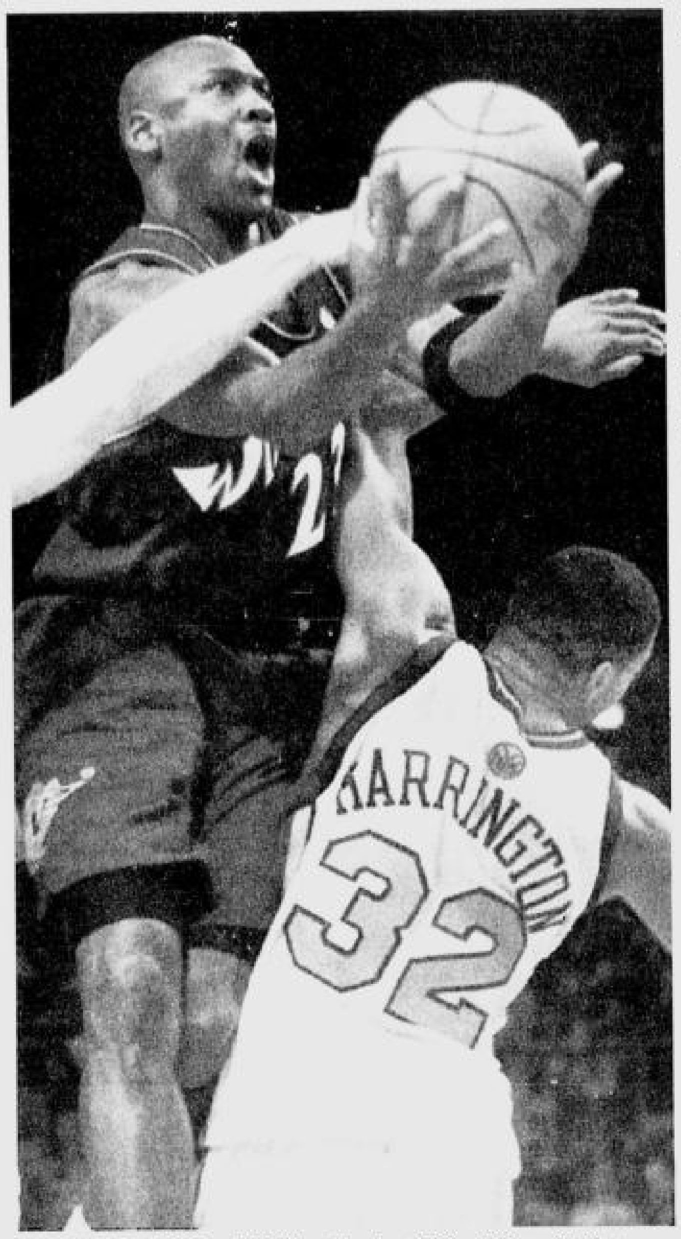
A project of Alberto Lina, chair of Air 21 and one of the BAP's vice presidents, the tournament aims to discover young and tall players for the Philippine team.

Under the scheme, each team will be provided with a sponsor from the PBA, which will also allow the use of its utility staff during the duration of the tournament.

The BAP, through secretary general Graham Lim, had sent out invitations to the school leagues and Tong Lian.

Proceeds of the ticket sales will be divided among the BAP, the Philippine Sportswriters Association and the six competing teams.

Arrangements are being made for the games' telecast under Viva TV.



WASHINGTON Wizards' Michael Jordan (left) collides with New York Knicks' Othella Harrington in file photo. REUTERS

Jordan, turning 40, is Player of the Week

By Jim Litke
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK—Raising the ante has always been the surest way to get Michael Jordan's attention.

And he turns 40 next month.

Fewer and fewer people may care, but lately Jordan seems intent on proving he can still play a little.

The stakes aren't as high and it takes more time to accomplish what he used to do in a flash, but that comes as no surprise to the rest of us. Age wrings concessions from everybody, even Jordan.

Right now, he's just renegotiating his lease.

On Monday, Jordan was honored as the NBA Player of the Week, something that hadn't happened since April 6, 1998. The award came in the middle of a five-game winning streak by the Washington Wizards and not coincidentally, during a stretch when Jordan logged more minutes than just about all of his teammates and anybody else in the NBA.

That wasn't the original plan he and coach Doug Collins made for this season. They were going to conserve minutes to save wear and tear on his knees, to rely more on the kids and the shopworn vets, and to let newly acquired Jerry Stackhouse take over the closer's role. *AP*

Kings clobber Nets

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Peja Stojakovic scored 24 points and Mike Bibby added 23 as the Sacramento Kings routed the New Jersey Nets 118-82 in NBA action on Thursday.

It was a showdown between two of the NBA's best teams, both with 26-9 records entering the game.

But the Kings totally dominated the Nets, who were looking to tie a franchise record with their 11th straight victory.

In Portland, Derek Anderson and Scottie Pippen both had 19 points to lead the Trail Blazers past the San Antonio Spurs 90-87.

Rasheed Wallace added 12 points and seven rebounds for the Trail Blazers, who improved to 21-13 while holding the Spurs to just 55 points after three quarters. *Reuters*

Ucap banners 70 fights

A JAMPACKED crowd is again expected at Mandaluyong Coliseum when the successful "Ucap International 9-Cock Derby" championship round gets underway at 6 p.m. today bannering 70 fights.

After two days of action, two bets remained unscathed so far as they posted five victories each. They are Makati sportsman Emil Chua (Concrete Breaker) and Batangas breeder Jun Marasigan (JM Sa Pasay Jan. 31).

Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free Shampoo, Pagcor-Casino Filipino, Heritage Hotel and Washout Shampoo.

Chua, solo champion of the prestigious Balbina 7-Stag Derby (136 entries) in 1999, 2002 Showdown 7-Stag and Las Piñas 5-Stag Derby, is again fielding the hard-hitting Sweater Lemons from the RPR Farm Negros while Marasigan is all set to loose imported fighters from Saipan.

But a group of four pointers are battle-ready to swarm the leaders. They are former World Slasher champion Raffy Yulo and Charlie Esteban (Charlie), Jimmy Cody of Alabama and former UCAP head Butch Macasaet (RQP-FRP Greenwood Balbina Cody), sabong idol Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan Hammer), Arthur Uy of Davao (Davao Matina March 3 5M), UCAP Cocker of the Year Jet Fernando (JSF-GP I), John Capinpin (JCAP MAD AT RBA), Wacky Salud (Mactan Casino April 11) and Romero Yu (JPC MW Ray Showdown).

At stake in the derby being hosted by OPMI president Vic Yu is a guaranteed prize of P2 million. For other inquiries, please contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 534-4110.

Yao tops All-Star voting

NEW YORK—Chinese sensation Yao Ming of the Houston Rockets continues to out-poll Los Angeles Lakers superstar Shaquille O'Neal in voting for the 2003 National Basketball Association All-Star Game.

Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, who set NBA records for three-pointers (12 of 18) and consecutive three-pointers (nine) on Tuesday against Seattle, is the top vote-getter in the West and overall, with 1,148,754 votes from fans.

Yao is second in the West with 1,015,018 leading all NBA centers. O'Neal is second among Western Conference centers with just 784,920.

Toronto Raptors swingman Vince Carter, who has missed 25 games this season due to injury, continues to lead all Eastern Conference vote-getters with 1,023,750 votes.

This year's All-Star Game is set for February 9 at Atlanta's Philips Arena. *AFP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1987, Rogelio Cabajar and Danny Zarate fired a 5-under-par 67 to rule via sudden-death playoff the Ft. Bonifacio Pro-Am golf tournament.

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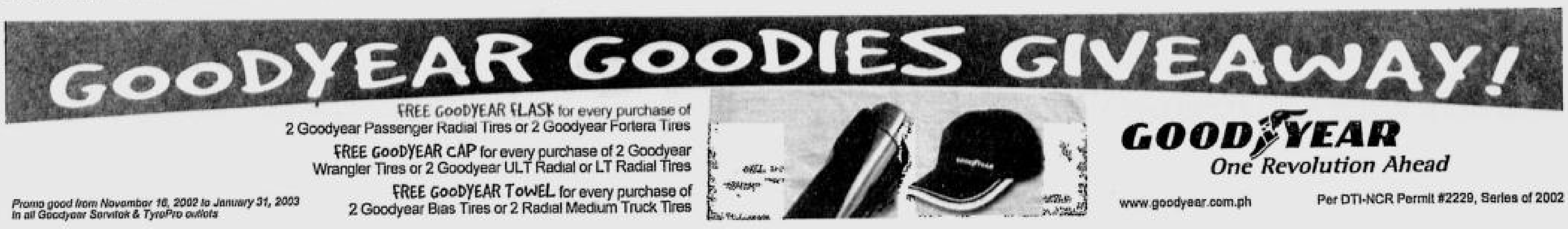

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❄ How to win Kodak Cameras!

Promo Period: November 17 to January 15, 2003*

1. Buy any Globe Prepaid SIM pack at any dealer or GT Business Center nationwide.

2. Activate your Globe Prepaid SIM by making a first chargeable call within the promo period. You will receive a text message with promo information from 2977 the day after you make your first chargeable call.
3. Text in REG<space>name<space>address to 2994 to join the promo. You will then be assigned one (1) electronic raffle entry number. Every Globe Prepaid SIM activated within the promo period that texts in to 2994 will receive only one (1) raffle entry number.
4. Every text message sent to 2994 will only be charged ₱1.00.
5. Globe will give away Kodak KB10 camera packages (with 1 box Kodak Max Exp 24-shot film and 2 pcs. AA battery) and Kodak Max HQ One-Time Use (24-shot) cameras daily. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
6. From the database of raffle entries, Globe will then randomly draw 1,000 winners of Kodak cameras daily thru an electronic randomizer. All subscribers who have activated within the promo period and have registered thru 2994 will be included in the raffle.
7. Daily draws will be held Mondays through Fridays (except Saturdays, Sundays & holidays) starting November 18, 2002 to January 15, 2003* every 4 p.m. at 4/F Globe Telecom Plazas Tower 2, corner Pioneer and Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City. Activations made after 12 m.n. will be included in the following draw date. If a draw date falls on a holiday, the draw will be conducted on the next working day.
8. A participant can win only once during the promo period. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she will receive the bigger prize.
9. The winning raffle entry for the daily draw is disqualified from the succeeding daily draws.
10. Winners will be informed via text broadcast from Globe Infocast: 2977 if they won in the daily draw.
11. Winners can claim prize by presenting their text coupon from 2977 at any of the participating Kodak Express/ Kameraworld/ Island Photo outlets nationwide. Globe and Kodak will conduct further validation and verification before awarding the prize.
12. Winners who do not claim their prize within 14 days of winning text notification from Globe Infocast: 2977 will receive registered mail from Globe Telecom, informing them that they have won.
13. Redemption of prizes shall be within sixty (60) days from receipt of the registered mail. If the prize is not claimed within sixty (60) days from notification by registered mail, the prize shall be forfeited in favor of Globe Telecom with prior approval of DTI. Redemption period starts on November 21, 2002.
14. Employees of Globe Telecom, Kodak Philippines, Harrison Communications, Inc., Ogilvy and Mather Philippines, and participating outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
15. Subscribers of Touch Mobile are not included in the promotion.

❄ How to win ₱350,000!*

1. All new Globe Prepaid Subscribers who made their first call within the promo period are also entitled to join the "CAPTURE A G MOMENT" promo.
2. Take a picture that captures a special moment with your family, friends and your Globe Handyphone. It can be funny, crazy or heartwarming.
3. Write your name, address, Globe Handyphone number, signature and the G moment at the back of your photo. Size of photo should be 4R and should be developed using Kodak paper. The G moment is a word or phrase that defines your special moment with Globe. Entries must be original, i.e, never made public in any form, derived from any medium nor submitted simultaneously for other competitions. The winning entry will become a property of Globe Telecom.

4. Place your entry inside a white legal envelope and mail to: "Capture a G moment Promo" c/o Harrison Communications, Inc., 4/F First Life Bldg, Salcedo St., Legazpi Village, Makati City.
5. Only entries received on or before January 15, 2003* will be qualified to join the contest.
6. Judging will be on January 17, 2003*, 4 p.m. at the Harrison Communications office.
7. Criteria for judging are:
   - a. Creativity 25% – use of Globe Handyphone in an imaginative/creative way
   - b. Uniqueness of moment 25% – capturing a special moment of human connection
   - c. Emotional Content 25% – portrays an inspiring/ moving emotion
   - d. G moment 25% – word/ phrase that defines your special moment with Globe
8. One winner of ₱350,000* (tax-free) will be chosen by Globe representatives and will be notified via a call through his/her Globe Handyphone to give information on how to claim the prize. In case he/she cannot be contacted by phone, he/she will be notified through registered mail.
9. Winner can claim prize, within sixty (60) days from notification by registered mail, at 4/F Globe Telecom Plaza Tower 2, corner Pioneer and Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City, upon presentation of a valid I.D.
10. Employees of Globe Telecom, Kodak Philippines, Harrison Communications, Inc., Ogilvy and Mather Philippines and participating outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

See flyers for details

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2291, Series of 2002.
*Approved by DTI-NCR

Editor Louie C. Camino

Coast Guard, Navy in diesel smuggling

P1.1 B in revenues lost, says study

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CORRUPT employees and officials of oil companies and government agencies, including the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard, were responsible for smuggling in P1.1 billion worth of diesel fuel between 1999 and 2001, according to a public policy think tank.

In a recently completed study, the Asian Institute of Management Policy Center (AIM-PC) said the following might be involved in illegal diesel traffic: Owners of barges and tankers/trucks; ship captains and seamen; past and present officials of oil firms; owners of depots and storehouses; and importers and owners of import terminals.

Also implicated were those who have connections in government and the military, and government employees in the Bureau of Customs, the Navy and the Coast Guard.

Some key industry players, which the AIM-PC interviewed, believe that 300,000 liters or 2,000 barrels of smuggled diesel were sold in the country each day.

Others say 10 to 40 million liters of illegal diesel were sold in the market each month, according to the 20-page report.

The volume is estimated to be about 7 percent of the country's total consumption of diesel.

Findings showed that the illegal supplies come from Malaysia and Indonesia and, possibly Brunei, Singapore, Thailand, and even as far as the Middle East.

The think tank however clarified that it was impossible to obtain verifiable data given the illegal nature of the subject.

The study also found out that the influx of fuel suppliers following the deregulation of the downstream oil industry in 1998 has made it increasingly impossible for government to ensure that all transactions are legal.

AIM-PC said the peddling of illegal diesel—which is cheaper by up to P3 compared to the legal supply—became rampant especially right after deregulation.

Diesel smuggling is believed to have increased beginning 2000, the report added.

The volume of hot diesel was estimated at 40 million in 1999, and ballooned to 257 million liters in 2000 and 290 million liters in 2001.

The AIM-PC said industry players think that the government suffers the most from diesel smuggling, with revenue losses of at least P1.1 billion during the three-year period.

Smugglers want to avoid taxes and to increase profits through higher margins, the report said.

JOAN BONDOC

CAR THIEVES' LAST STOP
With all humility, suspected car thieves Rogel Agustin, 23, Noel Hapa, 21, Arnold Tena, 35, and Marlon Asence, 27, listen as Camp Crame officials detail their offenses to reporters. In the press conference yesterday, police officials also said that the four men owned up to the murder of SPO3 Gerry Rodriguez of the Biñan police in Oct. 2000. (TJ Burgonio).

No bail in cops-vs-cops case

DID the shootout among cops in Quezon City came as a result of credit-grabbing?

As probers pondered this angle, the Central Police District yesterday filed murder, frustrated murder and illegal possession of firearms against the five Crame policemen who shot it out with Quezon City policemen early this week.

According to CPD District Director Senior Supt. Napoleon Castro, they recommended no bail for the murder charges they filed against SPO3 Tomas Tibor, SPO3 Ronnie Trinidad, PO1 Fernando Bundang, SPO1 Manolito Atanacio and PO1 Gil Flores. The five are members of the Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO) based in Camp Crame.

On the other hand, a bail of P120,000 was recommended for each of the accused for frustrated murder. Bail of P100,000 was recommended for each of the suspects for illegal possession of firearms.

All five suspects are now detained at the CPD Headquarters in Camp Karingal.

The five engaged members of the CPD Theft and Robbery Section in a shootout last Jan. 7 in the Munoz area in Quezon City. The shootout resulted in the death of one still unidentified suspected holdup and serious injuries to PO2 Basilio Bose.

Trinidad, Tibor and Bundang were arrested right after the shootout.

Castro said Atanacio surrendered a day after the incident while Flores turned himself in yesterday.

The CPD chief added that he had already talked to Chief Supt. Propero Noble who had promised to surrender his men under orders of PNP chief Director Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane.

Castro also questioned why the five had served as police escort for businessman Julio Tobiano. Only two police escorts are allowed to secure any person, Castro said.

The five said they were guarding Tobiano and the businessman's Progressive Poultry Store when the shootout occured.

At that time, Buce and the others were conducting an operation against suspected holdup men and tried to enter Tobiano's store to call for backup.

However, the five suspects opened fire at the CPD team thinking the Quezon City policemen were about to stage a robbery of the store. The ensuing gunfire left one holdup suspect dead and Buce wounded.

The poultry store was said to have been victimized repeatedly by robbery gangs in the past month and that Tobiano had requested police security.

Alcuin Papa

Reward now P1 million

A DAY after Supt. Rafael Cardeño ignored the one-week ultimatum for his surrender, Malacañang yesterday jacked up to P1 million the reward to anyone who could give information on the fugitive's whereabouts.

The bounty, which is 50 percent higher than the initial P500,000 reward, was meant to add more pressure on Cardeño, the alleged brains behind the murder of government informant Baron Cervantes in 2001, according to Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto.

Cardeño's lawyer Homobono Adaza had earlier asked Maganto to give him until Thursday to turn in his client. But in a private meeting that day, Maganto said Adaza sought another one-week grace period.

"Enough is enough," said Maganto, who had been tapped by President Macapagal-Arroyo to hunt down Cardeño following national police chief Hermogenes Ebdane's failure to arrest the fugitive.

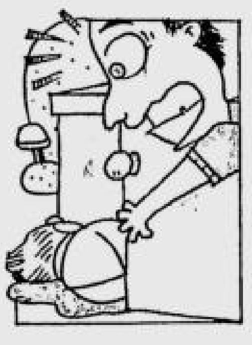
Maganto yesterday formally ordered members of Task Force Cervantes to commence the hunt and try to collar Cardeño in time for the start of the Cervantes trial on Jan. 15.

The team is also looking for Santiago "Sonny" Camacho, the supposed Land Transportation Office employee who allegedly set up Cervantes' murder in front of a drugstore in Las Piñas City.

Christian Esguerra

They did not want the victims to live

By Leila B. Salaverria



THE SUSPECTS who brutally killed the president of a promotions agency and its caretaker in Makati could have been motivated by extreme anger, police said.

According to SPO4 Leonardo Timtiman, head of the homicide division of the Makati Police, the manner of the killing of Vicente Banzuela, 43, and Carlito Alvarez, 60, indicates that the suspects might have had a personal vendetta against the victims.

He added that the suspects may have taken the victims' cellular phones, Alvarez's watch and the money in the office's safety vault to make probers believe that robbery is their mere motive, although SPO4 Leonardo Timtiman said police are not completely discounting the robbery angle. But police are positive that the suspects did not want the victims to live.

Alvarez was stabbed several times in the back, his body found in the living room of the Jovic International Promotion agency. Banzuela's body was discovered on the second floor of the office, his wrists bound by rope. Police believe he was stabbed as he lay helpless.

Investigators are also looking into the love angle, as Banzuela was known to have a mistress.

Police said Banzuela's wife had just come home the United States last November. While the wife was away, Banzuela had a relationship with another woman and sired three children with her, although police said both women knew about each other, and that their set-up is an open secret.

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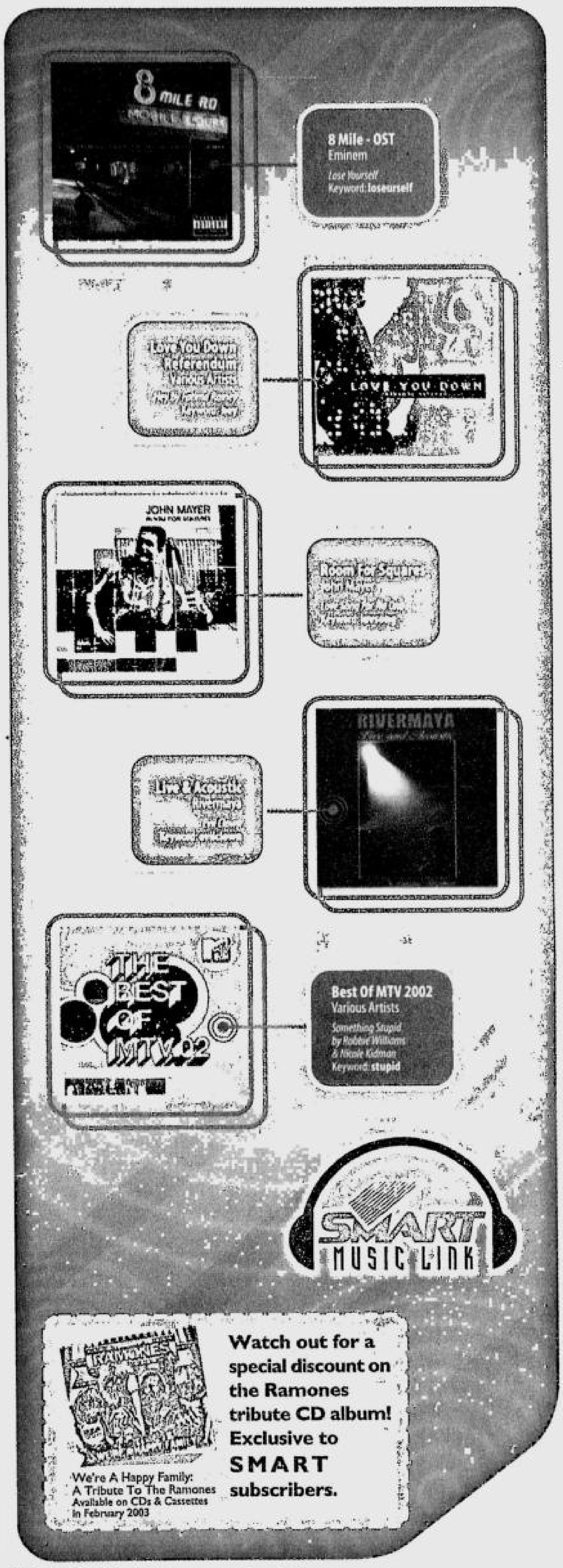

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5	Hijas Del Tomate	Las Ketchup	
6	Shaman	Santana	
7	Duets	Barbra Streisand	
8	Come Away With Me	Norah Jones	
9	Prelude: Best Of	Charlotte Church	
10	Best Of MTV 2002	Various Artists	keyword: stupid
11	Masters Of Chant Chapter III	Gregorian	
12	You Had Me At Hello	Various Artists	
13	Best Of 1990-2000	U2	
14	8 Mile - OST	Eminem	keyword: loseurself
15	It Had To Be You... The Great American Songbook	Rod Stewart	
16	Let Go	Avril Lavigne	
17	Love You Down - Referendum	Various Artists	keyword: hey
18	Chasing Time	Martin Nievera	
19	Chicago Story: Complete Greatest Hits	Chicago	
20	Simply The Best 60's	Various Artists	
21	Rivermaya: Live & Acoustic	Rivermaya	keyword: evilclown
22	OA Sa Hits (Live)	Ogie Alcasid	
23	Stripped	Christina Aguilera	
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Karma overtakes Dacer slay suspect

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

IN KEEPING with the separation of powers, courts should not interfere in the exclusive functions of offices within the executive department.

Cagayan de Oro Regional Trial Court Judge Francisco Rojas Sr. doesn't seem to respect the separation of powers among the three branches of government—executive, legislative and judiciary.

The judge recently issued an order preventing the reassignment of Esteban Baltazar, director of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) in Region 10 based in Cagayan de Oro City.

The order to transfer Baltazar from Region 10 to another assignment came from Assistant Transportation Secretary Roberto Lastimoso, LTO chief. Baltazar was affected in an ongoing revamp of the land transportation agency.

* * *

For reasons of his own, Baltazar wants to stay put at Region 10 in Mindanao.

Some LTO insiders say one of the reasons is monetary. He is being assigned to the LTO main office in Quezon City where, according to sources, he won't be "earning" in his new assignment—whatever that means.

So, Baltazar is fighting tooth and nail to be retained in his present post. He has sought the help of Judge Rojas who, it is said, is notorious for issuing temporary restraining orders (TROs) left and right.

* * *

In issuing a TRO on the transfer of Baltazar, the judge is infringing on a purely administrative matter. Transferring government officials or employees is a prerogative of the head of the agency to which those officials or employees belong.

Baltazar, or any judge for that matter, has no business preventing the transfer of a government official or employee.

The Supreme Court, which has supervision lower magistrates, should scold Judge Rojas.

* * *

If you believe in karma or divine justice, police Senior Supt. Teofilo Vina had it coming to him.

Vina was shot dead in Tanza, Cavite, Tuesday night. The motive is not yet known but his assailant has been arrested.

Vina was one of the primary suspects in the abduction-murder of PR practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

* * *

He allegedly took part in the elaborate planning and execution of the abduction-slay plot. Vina allegedly ordered the burning of the bodies of Dacer and Corbito after they were strangled while tied up.

All the suspects in the Dacer-Corbito abduction-murder case are in custody. But two of them—Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao—have escaped to either the United States or Canada. All were members of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) then headed by then Director General Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, PNP chief, in a concurrent capacity.

It is not known why Vina was free to roam while his alleged fellow conspirators are in jail awaiting trial.

* * *

My sources at the PNP said that Vina was asked during his interrogation whether Senator Lacson was involved in the dastardly crime.

His reply allegedly was: *Walang nangyayari sa PAOCTF na hindi alam ni Lacson* (Nothing happened at the PAOCTF that Lacson did not know of)."

Was Vina killed because he made that confession?

* * *

Anyway, according to a book on karma, no karmic debt ever goes unpaid.

What happened to Vina was karmic or divine justice. As surely as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, Vina's fellow conspirators in the abduction and murder of Dacer and Corbito will also be visited by karma.

If Senator Lacson is reading this, sooner or later, karma will catch up with you, Ping.

Ang masakit pa niyan, Ping, baka maabutan ka ng karma kapag ikaw ay Pangulo na ng Pilipinas. That is, in the unlikeliest possibility that you get elected to the country's highest position.

* * *

Policemen nowadays are so undisciplined they can't be forced to report to their superior officers or investigative agencies like the National Police Commission (Napolcom) to face civilians who complain against them.

PO2 R'man Galit (R'man is spelled correctly; *sa pangalan na lang mukhang may diperensiya na*-RT) and PO2 Rolando Ruivivar have consistently refused to face their accusers, first at the office of the commander of the Makati Police Station, where they belong, and then at the Napolcom.

My staff at "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" lodged a complaint of theft with the Makati Police Station for the criminal aspect and the Napolcom for the administrative aspect against the two cops.

* * *

Witnesses say Galit and Ruivivar took the cash and belongings found inside the car of Rex Lozarita who met an accident at the C-5 Road on Christmas Eve.

While being rushed to a hospital, Lozarita told people who helped him he had P50,000 wrapped inside a piece of cloth, a newly bought cellular phone; P2,000 in P20 bills; and Christmas goodies like wine and grapes.

Bystanders recovered the things that Lozarita said he had in the car and turned them over to the two cops who arrived at the accident scene in a patrol car. Also turned over to the cops was the car's stereo.

* * *

Of the things and cash that witnesses recovered inside the ill-fated car, only the cellular phone was returned by Galit and Ruivivar to Lozarita's parents.

They claim only the cellular phone was turned over to them.

If they are innocent of the charge of theft, why are they afraid to face the victim and the witnesses?

Murder suspect killed in QC shootout

MURDER suspect Armando dela Cruz was killed in a shootout with policemen in Quezon City on Thursday.

Injured in the gun battle was PO2 Alejo Ormilla, who was taken to the East Avenue Medical Center, police said.

Dela Cruz, of Barangay Holy Spirit, was suspected of killing the father of Janelet Calano last Jan. 4, police said.

The other day, Calano saw Dela Cruz on Sto. Domingo Street and immediately called the police.

Ormilla and a team from Quezon City Police Station 6 responded to arrest Dela Cruz.

When Dela Cruz spotted the policemen, he opened fire and hit Ormilla. The officers returned fire and killed the suspect on the spot. *Alcuin Papa*

NBI seizes counterfeit industrial equipment

By Philip Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents seized P3 million worth of fake welding electrodes and pressured pack pillows last week.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco identified the erring firms as C2000 Enterprises, owned by Miguel J. Tan, and Hanmen Industries Corp.

Wycoco said his men raided C2000's warehouse on Gasan Street, in Barangay Masambong, Quezon City and confiscated 2,718 boxes of fake Nihonweld welding electrodes worth P2 million.

The NBI-Intellectual Property Rights Division under Head Agent Rafael Z. Ragos began investigating the case after Manuel G. Ong, officer-in-charge of the Chamber of Philippine Welding Manufacturers, filed a complaint before the bureau.

NBI-IPRD agents confirmed C2000's illegal sale of fake welding electrodes after conducting surveillance and test buys.

They then obtained a search warrant from Judge Antonio M. Eugenio Jr. of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 24 and raided the warehouse on Jan. 2.

Also last week, the NBI raided Hanmen's office in Barangay Dila Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and confiscated 3,586 finished pressure pack pillows.

Wilfredo R. Bompat, president of Featherlite Corp., filed a complaint before the NBI, after he learned that the erring firm had been illegally manufacturing the products.

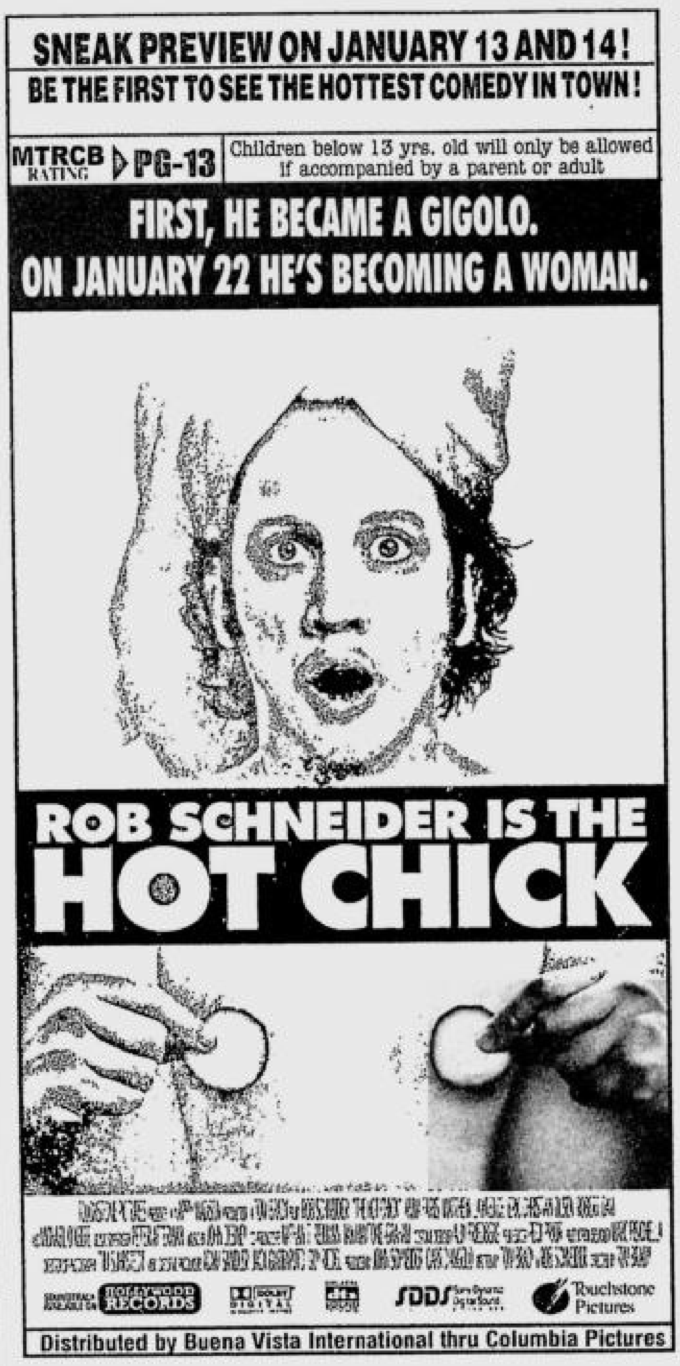
Wycoco said charges of unfair competition are being prepared against Hanmen's owners.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI-MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	MANO PO
Ali 2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
Ali 3	HALF PAST DEAD
Ali 4	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 6	DEKADA '70
Ali 7	LASTIKMAN
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	HALF PAST DEAD
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 13 & 15	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
JAN 21, 22, & 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 11	3 PM / 5 PM
JAN. 12	3 PM / 5 PM
JAN 16	10 AM / 3 PM

THEATER
MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MASARAP NA PUGAD / SEX LOVE
ODEON	HALF PAST DEAD
ODEON-2	PAMASAK BUTAS / EVANGELINE 14
ROBEN	KERIDA
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	RAIN OF FIRE / THE TOUCH
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	LASTIKMAN
QUEZON-1	KERIDA
REMAR	HALF PAST DEAD
REMAR-2	KERIDA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DEKADA '70
CINEMA-2	KERIDA
CINEMA-3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-6	AGIMAT
CINEMA-7	SHAOLIN SOCCER
CINEMA-8	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-12	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-14	MANO PO
CINEMA-15	LASTIKMAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA



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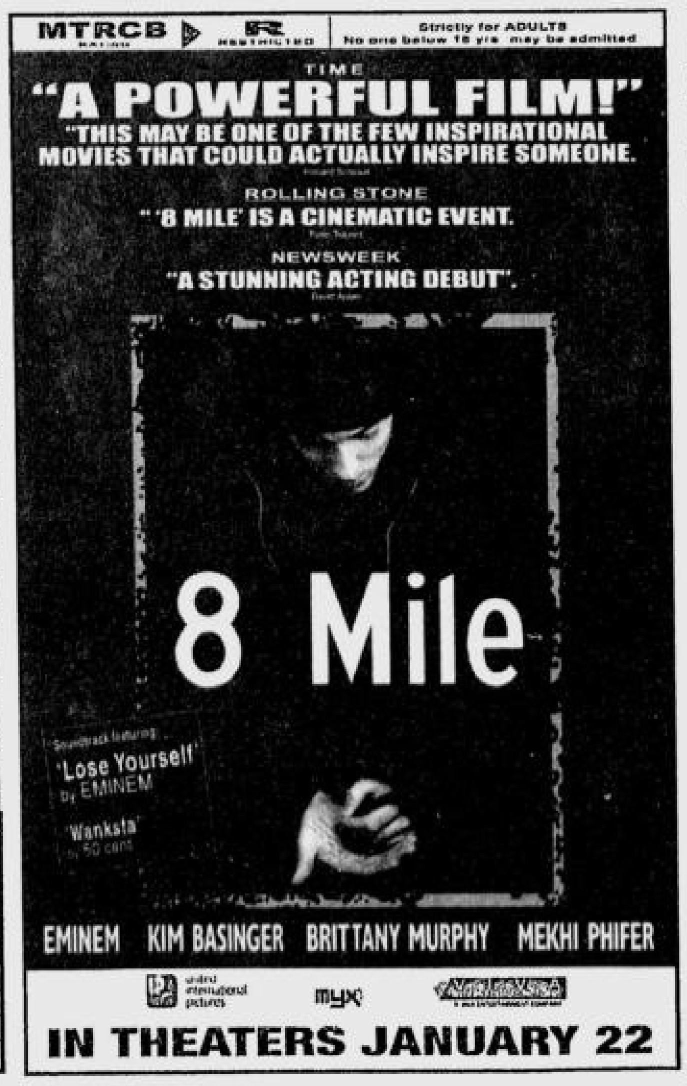

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HALF PAST DEAD P13 11:30,1:30,3:30, 5:30,7:30,9:30	MANO PO GP 12:05,2:50, 5:35,8:20	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 12:30,3:50,7:10,10:30

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Lawyer seeks justice

IN A strange twist, a lawyer who should be defending a client is now the one seeking personal justice from the court.

Lawyer Regulo Coloma, the Register of Deeds III at Caloocan City, has filed a formal petition after he was removed from his appointed position last year and transferred elsewhere allegedly without a specific cause and no due process.

"I am not clinging to my position, what I am fighting for are my principles and I want to clear my name in public, however I am leaving it to the court to decide my fate," said Coloma.

On his part, former Solicitor-General Frank Chavez, who is assisting the petitioner in case, linked the transfer of lawyer Coloma to the attempt of certain groups to ease the latter out of his position and have him replaced with somebody they can control.

In an interview, Chavez declared, "let me go direct to the point, this case is related to an on-going land dispute between the original heirs and registered owners of OCT No. 994, dated April 19, 1917 and another group of claimants holding the same OCT 994 but dated May 3, 1917."

"This despite the fact that the Supreme Court has already ruled in favor of the registered owners of OCT No. 994 dated April 19, 1917 in three previous and separate cases and declared the validity of title of said claimants, but it seems they are dastardly forced out there to thwart and frustrate justice from being served," Chavez added.

He explained that once Coloma is removed as Register of Deeds III of Caloocan, then those other groups would work for a replacement whom they can control. "There is obviously an attempt to conduct administrative proceedings and entertain claims that will virtually reverse the Supreme Court decisions," Chavez pointed out.

At the same time, Chavez questioned the authority of the Land Registration Authority Administration to remove, transfer, or discipline Coloma who is a Presidential appointee and, as such, "only the appointing party has the inherent right to impose disciplinary actions on the person concerned."

"If at all, it is the Secretary of Justice who may make a recommendation on the matter, certainly not the LRA Administration to act as judge, jury and executioner all in one," added the counsel.

"We are now seriously considering the filing of an administrative case against LRA Administration Benedicto Ulep to remind him about the parameters of his power and authority in relation to the Register of Deeds," Chavez said.

Inmates charge Manila chaplain

A PRISON chaplain is being tried by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology for maltreating three inmates, including a physically disabled prisoner, at the Manila City jail last month.

Fr. Bartolomen Sagadal, a roving priest originally from Sorsogon, was accused by the inmates of cursing and beating them because they failed to immediately carry out his orders.

Sagadal allegedly hit Cresencio Diones, Eliseo Badeo and Iniego Malana, all helpers at the St. Dimas Chapel inside the Manila City jail, with a thick roll of Manila papers in a fit of anger on Dec. 14 last year.

They got beatings on their head, neck and face, Diones said in his affidavit. Diones, who had lost his left arm and right eye before he went to jail, is a chapel orderly and the chief coordinator of the Sambayanan ni Kristo (SAKRIS), a religious association of inmates.

He said that Sagadal had tasked him to do the lettering for some materials that the priest would submit to Gen. Alit, and got furious when he still had not started three hours later.

Sagadal called him into the priest's office and started cursing him and hitting his face with the Manila paper, repeating that he was "the boss" in that prison, Diones said.

The priest also allegedly declared that he was even higher in rank than the jail warden and Rodolfo Diamante, head of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines episcopal commission on prison pastoral care.

Sagadal allegedly also lashed out at the two inmates, Malana and Badeo, who also happened to be in the same room with Diones.

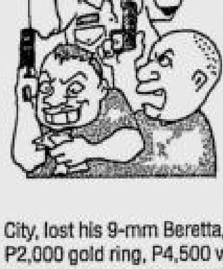
"We demand the necessary administrative sanctions be meted Isabelita Diones de Leon, sister of the complainant, said in her letter to the BJMP.

Blanche S. Rivera

METROBRIEFS

Robbery in Bagong Silang

PO2 CHARLIE Michael Retoma used to aid robbery victims. On Wednesday, Retoma himself became a victim of holdup men who stripped him clean of his cash and valuables, including his service pistol. According to PO1 Josellto Bagting, Retoma, 31, of the Southern Police District Office, and his companion Maria Victoria Amante, were lounging in front of an aunt's house in Bagong Silang, Caloocan City at about 7:30 p.m., when two armed men came up to them and proceeded to rob them. Bagting said Retoma, a resident of Muntinlupa City, lost his 9-mm Beretta, P13,000 gold bracelet, P2,000 gold ring, P4,500 watch, and P500 cash. Amante also lost her P18,000 gold necklace, two gold bracelets worth P14,500, an P8,500 watch and her 3310 cell phone. Before fleeing, one of the suspects even used his pistol to hit the policeman, leaving a gash on Retoma's head.



Tina Santos

Arrests in Fairview

SUSPECTED robber Arnie Licudan, 20, and his cohort Richard Case, 27, were arrested in Quezon City Tuesday night after they allegedly held up a passenger jeepney (TVU-298) bound for SM Fairview. Senior Insp. Manuel Abayon of Central Police District station 5 in Fairview, Quezon City, was on patrol at around 9 p.m. on the corner of Regalado and Commonwealth avenues, when he came across five men robbing passengers of a jeepney. Abayon was about to accost the suspects when Licudan fired a shot at the approaching officer, investigators said. Abayon fired back and hit Licudan. The police officer also managed to arrest Case, of Bagong Silang, Caloocan City, while the three other suspects escaped. Licudan, of Barangay Batasan, Quezon City, is now receiving treatment at the East Avenue Medical Center. Police are now looking for the three other suspects identified only as Jerry, Jimboy, and Allan.

Alcuin Papa

Jealous encounter in QC

JEALOUSY was what drove Bienvenido Mercado to attack a propsman of television network GMA-7 in Quezon City on Wednesday, according to police. SPO2 Rolando Nuguera of the Central Police District said Bienvenido suspected that propsman Al Prince Villanueva, 22, was having an affair with his wife, Imelda Mercado, also an employee of GMA-7. Nuguera said that when Bienvenido fetched his wife at work at around 12:15 p.m. at the GMA-7 compound on Timog Avenue corner Edsa in Quezon City, he spotted Villanueva leaving the compound. Mercado then noticed that his wife appeared to be sending a text message to someone and suspected it was Villanueva. Enraged, Bienvenido pulled out a blade and charged the victim. But Imelda managed to warn Villanueva of the attack. The victim was able to parry the attacker's blow. But Bienvenido still managed to stab the victim before he fled, Nuguera said. Villanueva is now being treated at the Capitol Medical Center.

Alcuin Papa

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▸ QUEZON CITY Robinsons Place Novaliches Level 1, Main Manila 935-8924 • 935-8920
▸ MANILA Robinsons Place Ermita, Level 3 525-007 • 525-0031
▸ ALABANG Festival Supermall, Level 2 850-3543 • 850-8540
▸ ORTIGAS Robinsons Galleria, Level 3 633-8202 • 632-0675
▸ LAS PIÑAS SM Southmall, Level 2 800-5317 to 18
▸ MUNTINLUPA Alabang Town Center, New Wing, Level 3 809-4639 • 809-3410
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	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1	LASTIKMAN	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 11:30, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
2	HALF PAST DEAD	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	MANO PO	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:10, 3:40, 7:10, 10:40	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
3	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:20, 4:00, 7:40, 11:20	Cinestage THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 10:45, 2:15, 5:45, 9:15	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12.50, 4:20, 7.50, 11:20	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
4	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)		THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 1:30, 5:00, 8:30, 12:00	HALF PAST DEAD
5		HALF PAST DEAD		HALF PAST DEAD 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
6		THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS			
7		THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS			

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333.
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*GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DOLBY) MANO PO
2 (SDDS) AGIMAT
3 (DTS) SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
4 (GOLD)(DTS ES) MANO PO
5 (GOLD)(DOLBY EX) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
7 (GOLD)(DOLBY EX) LASTIKMAN
8 LASTIKMAN
9 DEKADA '70
10 HOME ALONG D RIVER

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 LASTIKMAN
2 RESERVE
3 (DTS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 LASTIKMAN
2 DEKADA '70
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 MANO PO
3 AGIMAT
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
5 LASTIKMAN

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 HULI MO HULI KO
2 HOME ALONG D RIVER
3 LASTIKMAN
4 AGIMAT
5 MANO PO
6 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 LASTIKMAN
2 MANO PO

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13
RESERVE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 DEKADA '70
2 AGIMAT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515
1 RESERVE
2 AGIMAT
3 MANO PO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 LASTIKMAN
2 DEKADA '70
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
4 MANI PO

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (SDDS) MANO PO
4 HULA MO HULI KO
5. AGIMAT
6 DEKADA '70
7 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
8 (SDDS) HOME ALONG
9 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928
1 AGIMAT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 HOME ALONG D RIBER
4 (SDDS) DEKADA '70
5 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
6 (DOLBY) LASTIKMAN
7 (DTS) MANO PO
8 HULI MO HULI KO
9 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082
1 MANO PO
2 (SDDS) AGIMAT
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 (DOLBY) LASTIKMAN
5 HOME ALONG DA' RIBER

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 LASTIKMAN
2 DEKADA '70
3 (DTS) HOME ALONG D RIVER
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 (SDDS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Lords AGIMAT
Jennet MANO PO

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 LASTIKMAN
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
3 HOME ALONG D RIVER
4 MANO PO

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) AGIMAT
2 MANO PO
3 LASTIKMAN
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)
1 AGIMAT
2 AGIMAT

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 LASTIKMAN
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta center

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2 AGIMAT
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MANO PO
4 (SDDS) LASTIKMAN
5 (DTS) DEKADA '70
6 ALAMAT NG LAWIN
7 HOME ALONE DA RIBER

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400
1 LASTIKMAN
2 AGIMAT

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185, 534.2198
1 LASTIKMAN
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
3 (DTS) MANO PO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 MANO PO
2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY) DEKADA '70
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 MANO PO
2 (DOLBY) AGIMAT
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
4 LASTIKMAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 MANO PO
2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY) HOME ALONG DA' RIBER
4 (DTS) MANO PO

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
3 HULA MO HULI KO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 AGIMAT
3 (DTS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 LASTIKMAN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) HOME ALONG D RIBER
2 AGIMAT
3 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 HULI MO HULI KO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 HOME ALONG D RIBER

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 HOME ALONG D RIBER
2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 DEKADA '70
3 (DTS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 AGIMAT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS) AGIMAT
2 (DTS) RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0798
1 MANO PO
2 AGIMAT
3 DEKADA '70
4 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) AGIMAT
2 MANO PO
3 (DTS ES) DEKADA '70
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571
1 ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2 MANO PO
3 (DOLBY) AGIMAT
4 (DTS) LASTIKMAN

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ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 721

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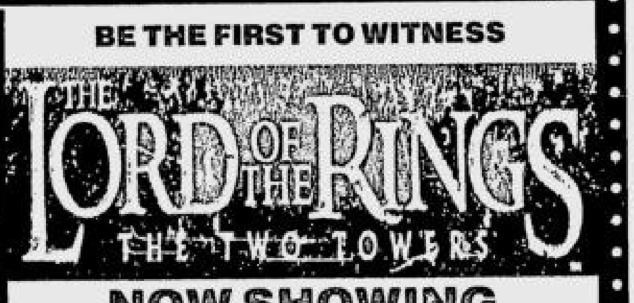
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868
1 KERIDA
2 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
6 LASTIKMAN
7 MANO PO
8 DEKADA '70

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 DEKADA '70
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 KERIDA
5 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
6 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7 HALF PAST DEAD
8 DIE ANOTHER DAY
9 MANO PO
10 LASTIKMAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9360749
1 HOME ALONE DA RIBER
2 DEKADA '70
3 AGIMAT
4 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
5 MANO PO
6 LASTIKMAN
7 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
8 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9 HALF PAST DEAD
10 KERIDA
11 LASTIKMAN
12 LORD OF THE RINGS 2

SM CITY MANILA
5239240
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 RING
3 MANO PO
4 LASTIKMAN
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
7 KERIDA
8 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
10 DEKADA '70
11 MANO PO
12 LASTIKMAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 RING
7 MANO PO
8 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
9 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
10 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
11 LASTIKMAN
12 KERIDA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
3 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4 MANO PO
5 RING
6 HALF PAST DEAD
7 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
8 LORD OF THE RINGS 2

SM SOUTHMALL
8006698
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 DEKADA '70
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 LASTIKMAN
5 HOME ALONE DA RIBER
6 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
7 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
9 MANO PO
10 KERIDA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LIKE MIKE
3 REPLI-KATE
4 DEKADA '70
5 LASTIKMAN
6 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7 MANO PO
8 HALF PAST DEAD

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422
1 DEKADA '70
2 CLOSED
3 SWIMFAN
4 MANO PO
5 LASTIKMAN
6 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7 CLOSED
8 REPLI-KATE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
3 MANO PO
4 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LASTIKMAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294675
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 HALF PAST DEAD

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 KERIDA
3 HALF PAST DEAD
4 LASTIKMAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2978998
1 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
2 SWIMFAN
3 LORD OF THE RINGS 2
4 DEKADA '70
5 MANO PO
6 LORD OF THE RINGS 2

SM BICUTAN
1 LORD OF THE RINGS
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 LASTIKMAN
4 LORD OF THE RINGS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 LONG TIME DEAD
2 LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO
4 SHAOLIN SOCCER

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-89

1 LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers
11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/
10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END

2 LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers
10:50 FS/11:20 MF/3:00/6:40/
9:50 LFS/10:20 LMF/1:30 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
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Regular Rate : P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279
THX LORD OF THE RINGS II - 11:00 AM (MF); 2:30 PM; 6:00 PM; 9:30 PM (LMF)
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 HALF PAST DEAD
4 RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5 LORD OF THE RINGS II
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 SPIRIT WARRIORS
8 MANO PO
9 DEKADA '70
10 LASTIKMAN

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema / P65 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 MANO PO
3 LASTIKMAN
4 RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 LORD OF THE RINGS II

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 LORD OF THE RINGS II
4 DEKADA '70
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 LORD OF THE RINGS II
8 MANO PO

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 DEKADA '70
4 LASTIKMAN
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 MANO PO
8 SPIRIT WARRIORS

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 HALF PAST DEAD
4 LASTIKMAN/KERIDA

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 MANO PO
3 SPIRIT WARRIORS
4 LASTIKMAN
5 LORD OF THE RINGS II
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 SPIRIT WARRIORS
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 LASTIKMAN
6 KERIDA

Sta. Rosa Laguna
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 LASTIKMAN
4 MANO PO
5 KERIDA

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459
1 HOME ALONG THE RIBER
2 VAMPS
3 MANO PO
4 DEKADA '70
5 SPIRIT WARRIORS
6 LASTIKMAN

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78
1 HULA MO HULI KO
2 LASTIKMAN
3 SWIMFAN
4 SPIRIT WARRIORS
5 REPLI-KATE
6 MANO PO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

End of days now looms for Cartimar

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE FIRST and oldest shopping center in the country might have to close shop because of a dispute over rentals and other policies between the tenants and the shopping center's new management.

About 120 tenants of Cartimar Shopping Center in Pasay City are protesting a new lease contract, requiring them to pay an advance and deposit equivalent to five months' rent.

Cartimar manager Jaime Genota is asking them to sign this new contract, according to Johnny Badiola, president of the Cartimar Tenants and Neighborhood Association, Inc.

The tenants yesterday threatened to leave the building simultaneously if no compromise is reached between them and management.

This might force the 52-year-old shopping center to close shop, warned Badiola.

He said tenants had long been required to pay only a month's advance and another month's deposit until Genota became manager three months ago.

Besides the new deposit rate, tenants were also forced to pay an additional 15 percent of the monthly electric bill, and P620 for every meter that tenant's goods occupy beyond the stall's perimeter, Badiola said.

"(Genota) is milking us dry," he told the INQUIRER.

But Genota explained that he was merely enforcing the provisions of existing lease contracts. He said that one of the provisions require tenants to pay all obligations which have been standing for many years.

On the issue of new rates, they have to understand that these will be spent for the maintenance and improvement of Cartimar," Genota said. "I'm just implementing what's in the contracts."

Established in 1951, Cartimar used to be a shopping mecca that attracted customers from all over the country before the advent of shopping malls. It's where one could find PX goods and branded clothes that have no local distributors.

But with imported products flooding the market today, Cartimar has lost its appeal to shoppers.

Today, Cartimar is popular for cheap rubber shoes and apparel that are sold in the stalls.

It also has a wet market, pet and appliance repair shops, and office spaces.

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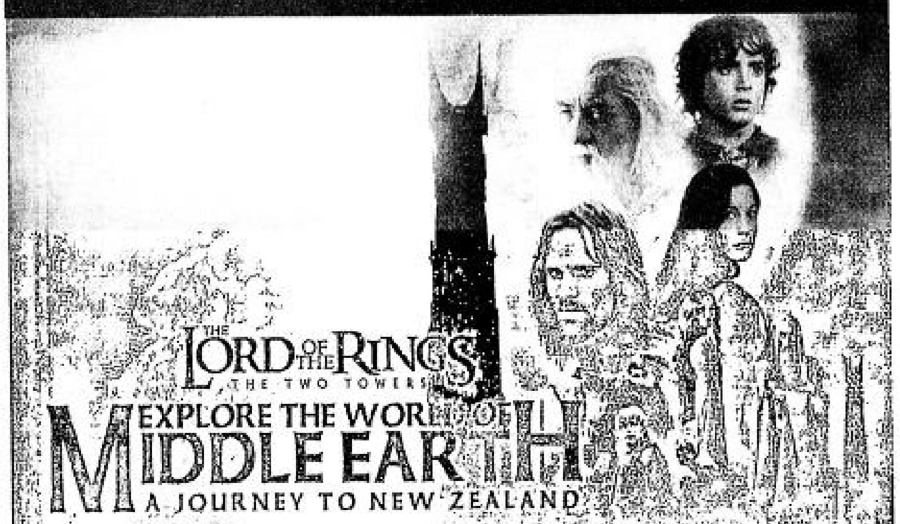
SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL DWRT PREMIERE
on January 11, 2003 • 7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 4
MTRCB RATING: PG 13
Regular Showing on January 17, 2003 at the SM CINEMAS
Simultaneously shown at
SM Pampanga • Cebu • Iloilo • Davao • Cagayan de Oro
"THE BEST SCARY MOVIE SINCE 'THE SIXTH SENSE'... 'THE RING' WILL HAUNT YOU."
SUSAN GRANGER, SSG SYNDICATE
"NOT SINCE 'THE EXORCIST' OR 'ROSEMARY'S BABY' HAS A MOVIE BEEN SO TRULY FRIGHTENING."
PAT COLLINS, WWOR
"'THE RING' RAISES SOME SERIOUS GOOSE BUMPS."
DAVID ANSEN, NEWSWEEK

GET A CHANCE TO WIN A TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS
GLORIETTA 1, GLORIETTA 4, GREENBELT 1, GREENBELT 3 AND ALABANG TOWN CENTER


THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF MIDDLE EARTH
A JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND

PROMO MECHANICS :
1. For every purchase of two (2) Lord of the Rings 2 – The Two Towers movie tickets at any Ayala Cinemas – Glorietta 1, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 1, Greenbelt 3 and Alabang Town Center entitles customer to one (1) Lord of the Rings 2 raffle coupon.
2. Customer to fill up Lord of the Rings 2 raffle coupon with their name, age, home address, office address, handyphone number and email address and affix signature. Customer to drop the attached coupon in thedesignated drop boxes located at the Ayala Cinemas ticket booths.
3. Deadline for submission of entries is on February 9, 2003 10pm. Raffle draw will be on February 22, 2003 3pm at Glorietta 4 Cinemas Lobby, Makati City in the presence of a DTI representative.
4. Prizes include the following:
Raffle Prizes
4.1 Trip for 2 to New Zealand via Qantas Airways — 1 Winner
4.2 Gift Certificates worth P1,000.00 from Ayala Malls merchants — 2 Winners
4.3 Dinner for 2 in TGIFridays — 2 Winners
4.4 Movie tickets for 2 in Ayala Cinemas — 25 Winners
(5 winners per Ayala Cinema – Glorietta 1, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 1, Greenbelt 3 and Alabang)
5. Prizes are transferable but not convertible to cash.
6. Customer can win only once. If a customer is drawn more than once, he/ she will get the bigger prize.
7. Winners will be notified through registered mail and telephone call.
8. Prizes can be claimed at the Ayala Land, Inc./ Ayala Cinemas office located at the 5th Floor, Glorietta 4 Building, Ayala Center, Makati City. Please look for Ms. Bunny Lazatin every Monday to Friday from 8:00am – 11:00am and 2:00pm – 4:00pm.
9. To claim prizes, present the notification letter sent by the Ayala Cinemas, claim stub and 2 valid I.D.'s (SSS, Voter's ID, PRC, Driver's License, Passport) with recent picture.
10. Customer may claim their prize until 60 days from receipt of notification letter. Prizes not claimed within the 60 day from receipt of notification letter will be forfeited in favor of Ayala Cinemas with prior approval from DTI-NCR.
11. Securing travel documents and other travel related expenses should be shouldered by the winner. The 20% prize tax will be shouldered by the sponsor.
12. Employees of Ayala Land Inc. and Ayala Cinemas and its promotion agencies including relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
13. Promo runs from January 11 to February 9, 2003.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0102. Series of 2003.
NOW SHOWING AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS
PIONEER MANILA BULLETIN
AYALA CENTER
TOWN
AYALA CENTER

EXTENDED!
MTRCB RATING GP GENERAL PATRONAGE | All Ages Admitted
MULTI AWARDED ENTRY OF MMFFP 2002
•BEST PICTURE •BEST SCREENPLAY
•BEST DIRECTOR •BEST ACTRESS
•BEST STORY •BEST ACTOR
MANO 吻手 PO
A FILM BY JOEL LAMANGAN DGPI
•GAT PUNO VILLEGAS AWARD
•BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
•BEST EDITING
•BEST MUSICAL SCORE
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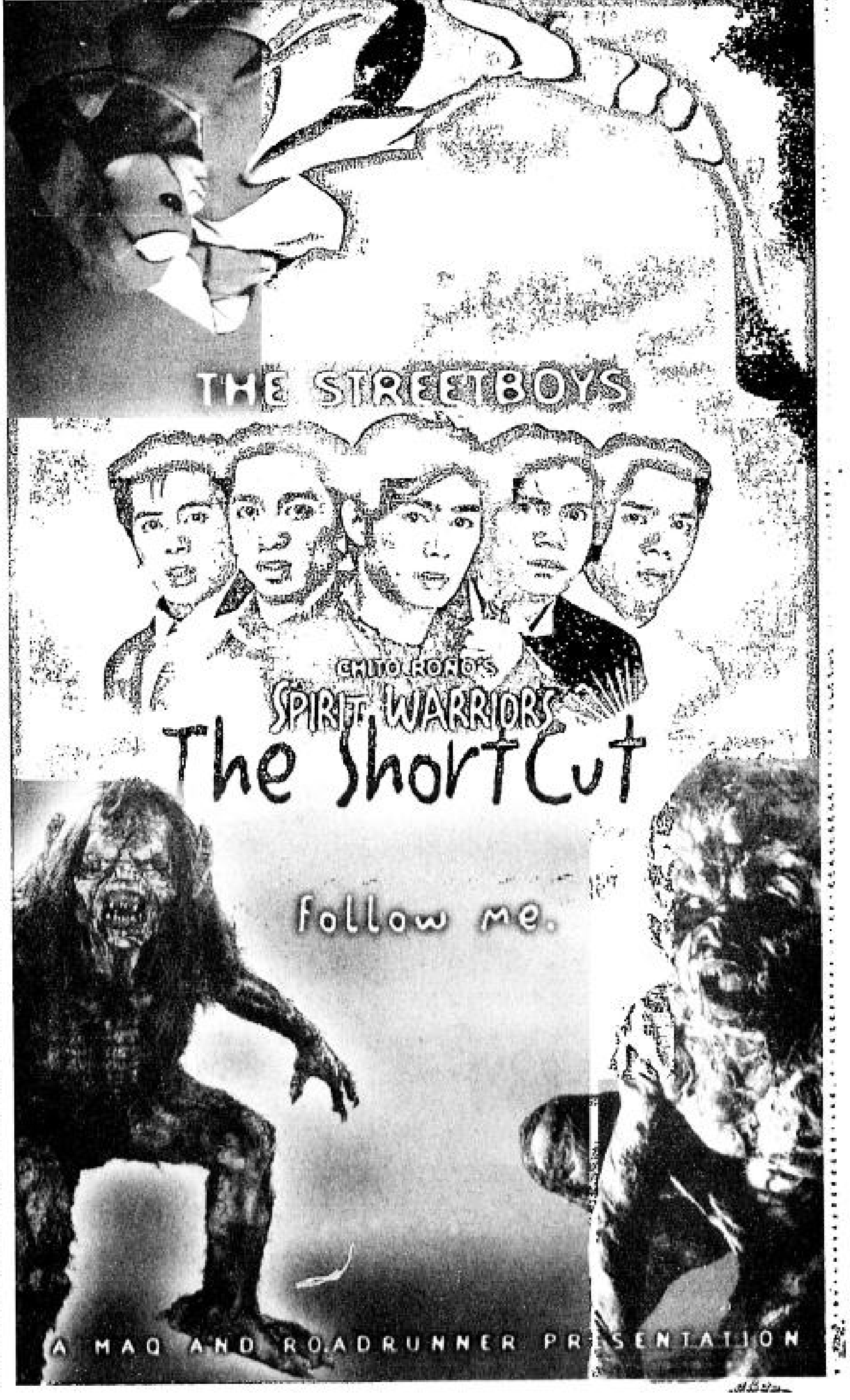


Cars parked in front of schools to be towed

By Leila Salaverria

NO PARKING space, no school concerts.

Otherwise, vehicles parked in front of the schools and clogging traffic during school activities like concerts will be towed, warned Metro Manila Development Authority's Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel De Dios.

He said MMDA would ask school officials in the metropolis to provide enough parking space for the number of vehicles that would flock to their schools for parties, concerts and other special activities.

If the schools do not have parking space, they would be asked not to have special activities in their campus.

Vergel de Dios said the MMDA was able to monitor extreme traffic congestion on roads in the vicinity of private schools whenever concerts, parties, school fairs, graduations, homecomings and other special activities are held there.

"The vehicles of the schools' guests were parked on the roads," De Dios said. "We were even able to monitor triple parked vehicles in front of La Salle Greenhills during a concert in that school."

MMDA chair Bayani Fernando has ordered that a letter be sent to school officials to ask them to provide parking space for vehicles during these special events, De Dios said.

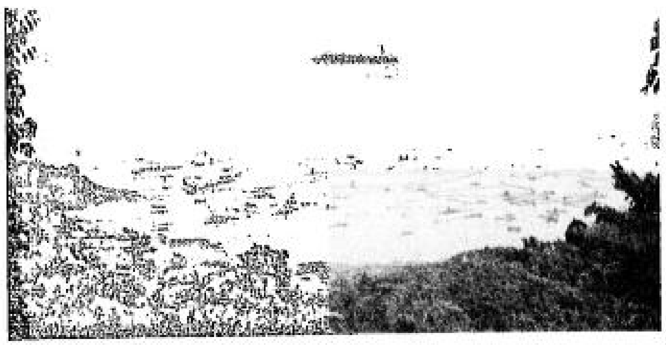
"They should open their grounds (for parking)," De Dios said. "Some of these schools have very spacious grounds. If not, then the school officials or the vehicle owners should look for parking space. It's the school's duty to look for parking space for their cars. They should not relegate that responsibility to the government."

Vergel De Dios also warned private vehicle owners who park on the roads in front of schools while waiting for the students that their cars would be towed.

"They will definitely be towed," he said. "Chairman Fernando has told us that it's about time we implement the rules and regulations equally."

The traffic director said it's okay for private vehicles to drop off students in front of the schools, but they should not stay long and clog the traffic.

He added that even if the car has a driver and its engine is running, it would be towed if it stays too long on the road.



LAGUNA de Bay

Livelihood opportunities in Laguna Bay reclamation

MUNTINLUPA City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi is giving full backing for the planned reclamation of Laguna de Bay, saying this would provide more livelihood opportunities for the people of Muntinlupa.

The government of Netherlands is supposedly funding the construction of four polder islands on Laguna de Bay which will consist of a commercial area and a residential zone within the city, a water reservoir in the Taguig part of the lake and a one-stop garbage facility in the San Pedro, Laguna side.

City administrator Henry Reyes said the four islands will be about half a kilometer away from each other and will be connected to the shore and to each other by several highways.

He said the construction of the lake islands will not severely affect the livelihood of fishermen near the shore because islands would be established one kilometer away from the city's shore.

But Reyes added that the reclamation of four islands in the lake may have an effect on certain sectors of the society. This, however, will be compensated by the produce of the infrastructure facilities that would be developed.

He assured that contamination of water due to the construction of a garbage disposal facility will be addressed by sealing the islands, preventing water from coming through or garbage leachate from seeping into the lake's floor.

The garbage facility will contain a recycling and a composting structure, Reyes said.

5 suspected drug dealers arrested

By Alcuin Papa

Five suspected drug dealers were arrested in separate buy-bust operations in Quezon City on Thursday.

Members of the anti-narcotics group of the Central Police District Police Station 1 in La Loma apprehended Elmer Azul, 18; and Arman Zamora, 18, both of Barangay Tatalon, at about 9:00 a.m. on Thursday.

Police said the two were caught trying to sell a small sachet of shabu.

A sachet of shabu was also found inside Zamora's pocket, police said.

Virgilio Jimenez, 37, of V. Francisco Street in Barangay Krus na Ligas, was also arrested for possession of marijuana by members of CPD Police Station 8 last Thursday.

The Drug Enforcement Unit of CPD Police Station 10 chanced upon suspects Jonathan Rabino, 26, of Kalayaan Avenue in Barangay Central; and Dennie Gatbonton, 29, of Area C in Barangay Botocan. Both were arrested at about 4:00 p.m. on Thursday inside Forestry Compound, Barangay Central, Quezon City after they were found in possession of shabu.

All five suspects are now in police custody and are facing drug charges.

Smoke grenade goes off in Quezon City tunnel

By Alcuin Papa

QUEZON CITY police went on alert yesterday after a smoke grenade went off inside the tunnel near the Sandiganbayan along Commonwealth Avenue, Batasan Hills.

Three men were arrested in connection with the incident, police said.

Police identified the suspects as Ricky Sales, 22; Eddie Gana, 30; and Antonio Laputan, 27, all residents of Barangay Batasan Hills.

The three were arrested by policemen assigned at the Batasan Police station after the smoke grenade went off. The three are now in police custody and are undergoing interrogation, authorities said.

In his report, PO1 Ricardo Llena said motorists, bystanders and residents in the area were surprised when thick black smoke engulfed the tunnel at about 4 a.m. yesterday.

A manager of a nearby beerhouse called the police to report the incident, the report said.

Members of the Central Police District Police Station 6 in Batasan immediately went to the scene.

The report said that when the smoke cleared, bomb disposal experts also found fragments of a smoke grenade.

Police also arrested the three suspects.

Under questioning, the three suspects denied they had anything to do with the smoke bomb.

They told police that they were just bystanders.

They said they were surprised when police arrested them.

Police are pursuing their investigation, and Quezon City remains on alert.

OPENS TODAY AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS
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THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
SCREENING SCHEDULES

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
CINEMA 1 - 1:00; 4:20; 7:40; 11:00
CINEMA 2 - 12:20; 3:40; 7:00; 10:20
CINEMA 3 - 11:40; 3:00; 6:20; 9:40
CINEMA 4 - 11:00; 2:20; 5:40; 9:00

GLORIETTA 1 (QUAD)
CINEMA 3 - 11:20; 2:40; 6:00; 9:20
CINEMA 4 - 12:00; 3:20; 6:40; 10:00

GREENBELT 3
CINEMA 1 - 11:30; 3:00; 6:30; 10:00
CINEMA 2 - 12:10; 3:40; 7:10; 10:40
CINEMA 3 - 12:50; 4:20; 7:50; 11:20
CINEMA 4 - 1:30; 5:00; 8:30; 12:00

GLORIETTA 4
CINEMA 1 - 11:10; 2:50; 6:30; 10:10
CINEMA 2 - 11:50; 3:30; 7:10; 10:50
CINEMA 3 - 12:20; 4:00; 7:40; 11:20
CINEMA 6 - 1:00; 4:40; 8:20; 12:00
CINEMA 7 - 10:30; 2:10; 5:50; 9:30

ONSTAGE - GREENBELT 1
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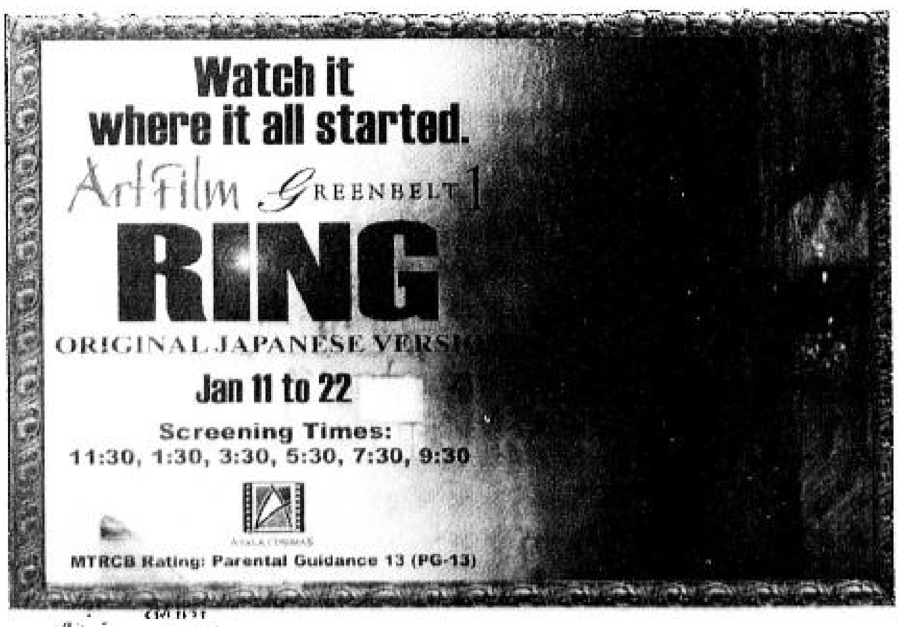
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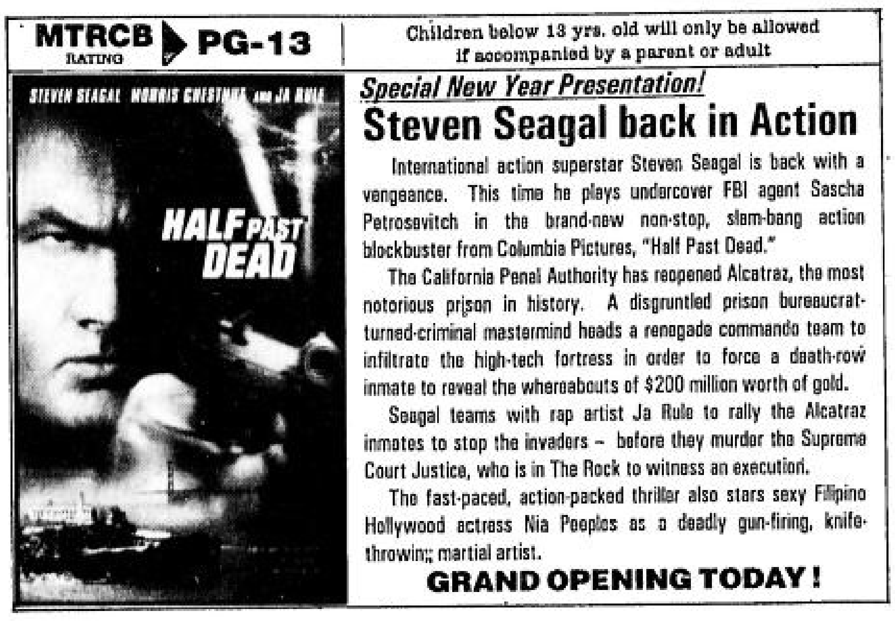
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STEVEN SEAGAL MORRIS CHESTNUT AND JA RULE
HALF PAST DEAD
Special New Year Presentation!
Steven Seagal back in Action
International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."
The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.
Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.
The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwin;; martial artist.
GRAND OPENING TODAY!

Nazarene procession augurs a good year

MAYOR Atienza rings the bell at Quiapo Church sending off the mammoth procession.

DESPITE a bigger turnout of devotees for the feast of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, the traditional procession went smoothly and without any untoward incidents on Thursday.

This could be a portent of good year, "said Manila Mayor Lito Atienza who rang the bell on top of the arch fronting the Quiapo Church as the image of the Black Nazarene aboard a carriage emerged from the church and passed underneath.

Atienza and his wife Beng again stood as Hermano Mayor and Hermana Mayor, respectively, for this year's celebration of the feast of the Black Nazarene. They were also joined by Senator John Osmeña.

Quiapo Church, formally known as the Basilica of Saint John the Baptist, is the parish church of the City of Manila.

"The procession started well and the movement of the crowd was relatively smooth. There were no untoward incidents and the Black Nazarene steadily made its way across Plaza Miranda after emerging from the church. This is considered by devotees as a portent of good fortune for the country," said Atienza.

As is the belief among devotees, the conduct of the procession, especially as the Black Nazarene emerges from the church and makes its way across Plaza Miranda, is an indication of what is in store for the country's Catholic faithful for the rest of the year.

The roiling sea of humanity swayed from side to side and surged forward at the same time as devotees grabbed, wrestled and tugged at the two long ropes attached to the carriage bearing the Black Nazarene.

In line with Atienza's directive to maintain order at this year's procession, the Western Police District deployed six hundred policemen around Plaza Miranda and along the route of the procession, with about 20 patrol cars stationed at the intersections along the route.

The procession started at the Quiapo Church at Plaza Miranda and made its way around the whole Quiapo area before going back to the church.

Before the start of the procession, Atienza spoke before the devotees who flocked to Plaza Miranda, urging them to respect the sanctity of life and work to strengthen the family as the basic unit of Philippine society and the Filipino-Christian community.

"This should be our foremost concerns as we celebrate the feast of the Black Nazarene and as we prepare for the fourth World Meeting of Families to be held here in Manila this month," said Atienza.

Atienza, along with Western Police District Director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong and other city and police officials, closely monitored the progress of the procession from a tactical operations center located at Plaza Miranda.

The policemen deployed along the route of the procession were linked to the tactical operations center by radio and gave regular updates on the progress of the procession.

The image of the Black Nazarene returned to the minor basilica amid a mesmerizing mix of fireworks and joyful chants from devotees.

Everything went smoothly.

SEA of Nazarene devotees.

A real joy: Poor kids get celebrity treatment

THERE was a lack of tickets that entitled the kids to holiday goodies.

But everybody had fun as SACK Arts and Samahang Alige provided a happy preview for 2003 when they treated hundreds of street children to its "Handog sa Bagong Taon" recently at Barangay Vergara, Riverside Park, Mandaluyong City.

The festive occasion was graced by SNACK artists led by Ms Boots Anson Roa, Lara Fabregas, Anna Fegi, Bayang Barrios, Alma Concepcion, Ces Quesada, Jack Borlaza and celebrity friends Angelu de Leon, Ivy Violan, model Jonas Gruet and Jeanne Young.

The afternoon affair had games, singing competitions, performances by the celebrities, gift-giving, and entertainment by Ronald McDonald.

Capping the event was McDonald's giving away of party hats, balloons and toys and providing the snacks.

Some 150 tickets were distributed to selected "needy kids" before the affair.

Over 500 hundred kids rushed in for the holiday treat.

To solve the dilemma, organizers had the other kids, who failed to secure the ticket, line up for goodies and snacks close to the end of the holiday affair.

Everybody had fun.

A tradition started by journalist and artists' manager Bibsy Carballo 14 years ago, this year's festivities was made possible through the help of Samahang Alige, an NGO in Mandaluyong responsible for the establishment of the Vergara Riverside Park; and generous sponsors McDonalds, Purefoods, SM Foundation, Merriam & Webster Bookstore, Speed Detergent Bar, Lampara Books, Mommy Academy, and the invaluable assistance of Peter Sing, Barangay Chairperson Lily de la Cruz, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos, and Ruperto C. Tan of Eterton Enterprises who lent the lot area, a former junkyard which now serves as an all-purpose village park.

POOR kids had a day of their life as they do holiday number with Ces Quesada and Angelu de Leon.

ALMA Concepcion shakes it up with more kids who have been fitted head gears.

JEANNE Young and Lara Fabregas take time out in "Handog sa Bagong Taon' in Barangay Vergara, Mandaluyong.

Navotas turns 97

By Tina Santos

THE MUNICIPAL government of Navotas has lined up a series of activities for the week-long celebration of the town's 97th founding anniversary.

The anniversary celebration, dubbed "Sama-Sama, Tulong-tulong, Patuloy ang Pagsulong," kicked off yesterday with an ecumenical service and motorcade at 7 a.m.

Lined up for next week are a mural painting contest, an inter-school quiz bee, drum and lyre and dance sports competitions, an inter-barangay singing contest and the Mutya ng Navotas beauty pageant.

On anniversary day, Jan. 16, the winners of the various contests will receive their awards, while citations will be handed out for the outstanding municipal officials and employees.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has officially declared Jan. 16 a special holiday in Navotas to allow the townsfolk enough time to celebrate the historic event, according to Mayor Toby Tiangco.

Navotas used to be part of Malabon until it was declared a separate town in 1906. Today, Navotas has 14 barangays with a population of 250,000.

In 2001, Navotas won the Gawad Pangulo sa Kapaligiran award for being the cleanest and greenest community in Mero Manila.

Tiangco said the town is setting its sights on cityhood, likely to be realized within the year.

"I still have grand plans for the town," Tiangco said. "I strongly believe that only by becoming a city will Navotas achieve its full potential for growth."

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Liability for knowingly rendering an unjust judgment—For liability to attach, the assailed order or actuation of the judge in the performance of official duty must not only be found to be erroneous but, most importantly, it must be established that he was moved by bad faith, dishonesty, hatred or some other like motive. Similarly, a judge will be held administratively liable for rendering an unjust judgment—one which is contrary to law or jurisprudence or is not supported by evidence—when he acts in bad faith, revenge or some other similar motive. In other words, in order to hold a judge liable for knowingly rendering an unjust judgment, it must be shown beyond reasonable doubt that the judgment was made with a conscious and deliberate intent to do an injustice. In fine, bad faith is the ground for liability in either or both offenses. This criteria can not be applied to respondent Justice since there is no showing of any wrongful, improper or unlawful conduct on his part. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Ynares-Santiago, Tan v. Cosico, A. M. No. CA-02-23, July 31, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, January 11
After Epiphany

1st Reading: 1 Jn 5:14-21
Gospel: Jn 3:22-30

Jesus went into the territory of Judea with his disciples. He stayed there with them baptizing. John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim where water was plentiful; people came to him and were baptized. This happened before John was put in prison.

Now John's disciples had been questioned by a Jew about spiritual cleansing, so they came to him and said, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, and about whom you spoke favorably, is now baptizing and all are going to him."

John answered, "No one can take on anything except what has been given him from heaven. You yourselves are my witnesses that I said: 'I am not the Christ but I have been sent before him.' Only the bridegroom has the bride; but the friend of the bridegroom stands by and listens, and rejoices to hear the bridegroom's voice. My joy is now full. It is necessary that he increase but that I decrease."

Commentary

John the Baptist's contentment is deeply moving. From the point of view of this competitive world, he is losing. His followers and the crowds are flocking to the newcomer, Jesus. And yet there is no rancor or bitterness in John, only a profound satisfaction. We who experience so much restlessness and dissatisfaction even amidst all that we possess must interrogate John for the secret of his contentment. His peace seems to come from a sense of knowing the essential mission and purpose of his life, which he embraces, without a desire to diminish or overstep: "No one can take on anything except what has been given him from heaven." His joy, too, seems to spring from a love for God's people, who, at last, have found in Jesus the bridegroom they have longed for.

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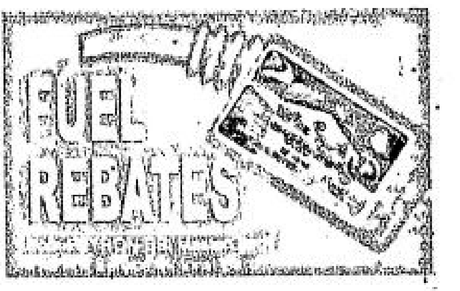
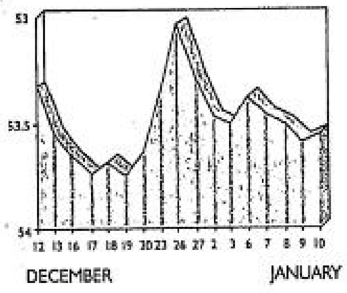


2002 economic growth seen at 4.3%

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., Jan. 10, 2003

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per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 10, 2003

STOCK MARKET

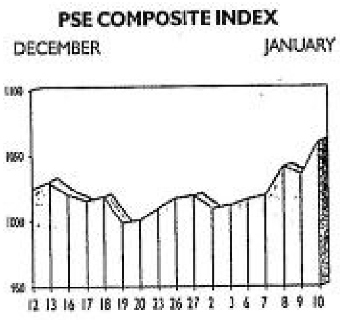
Shares end higher on economic reforms

SHARES closed sharply higher yesterday as two major economic reforms were signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo at a ceremony on the trading floor of the stock exchange shortly before the session opened, traders said. ***(See related story on this page.)***

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 22.99 points, or 2.2 percent, at 1,058.30, its best close in nearly two months.

"The market appears to be reacting favorably to the steps being taken by President Macapagal in laying down the policy framework to ensure a

SHARES/ B2



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE ECONOMY was estimated to have expanded by 4.3 percent in 2002 on the back of robust farm production.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said yesterday that the growth in the country's gross domestic product for 2002 would be within the government's target of 4-4.5 percent.

The economic planning chief said that aside from improved crop production which grew by 4.9 percent, the industry sector likewise expanded by 4.3 percent, and services by 4.8 percent.

"We are expecting a very strong performance from the agriculture sector because of the better-than-projected harvest that came in during the fourth quarter instead of the usual season, which is the third quarter," Neri said.

From January to September, the economy grew by 4.1 percent. The growth was 3.8 percent in the third quarter alone.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee had projected a GDP growth of 4.2 percent to 5.2 percent for this year.

The IMF and the World Bank have projected a 4-percent GDP growth for the Philippines this year. The Fund believed that the economy would slow down to 3.8 percent in 2003 while the World Bank believed it would hit 4.3 percent.

NERI

Neri clarified that the 6-percent GDP growth for next year that he had projected was just a "dream" forecast, one that might not necessarily happen.

"A 5-percent GDP growth is more realistic but we will still strive for 6 percent. Anyway, reality starts with a dream," said the new economic planning chief.

Neri said he would try to push for better growth without resorting to pump-priming or expanding the economy with higher spending. He said the government would finance very crucial infrastructure projects with official development assistance (ODA) funds. However, he noted that with the modest inflation average of 3.1 percent in 2002, the government could afford to spend more.

Rival brokers do a Gloria, junk reelection bids

By Elena R. Torrijos and Doris C. Dumlao

TAKING their cue from President Macapagal-Arroyo, brokers and bitter rivals Vivian Yuchengco and Robert Coyiuto Jr. are sacrificing their ambitions to be reelected chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange this March in order to help revive the equities market.

In her speech yesterday morning at the PSE office on Ayala Ave., the President congratulated the two brokers for withdrawing their candidacies "to remove the poison in the stock market the way I renounced my candidacy for President to remove the poison from the body politic."

The squabble between Yuchengco, current PSE chair, and Coyiuto, former chair, have tarnished the image of the exchange and stymied or slowed down some reforms.

The former PSE chairs have also been asked to sign an agreement that they would not seek reelection in the elections of the exchange in March.

Past PSE chairs Felipe Yap, Wilson Sy and Roberto Z. Lorayes have already either signed the agreement or given their word they will not run while Trina Kalaw and Harry Liu have yet to indicate their stance.

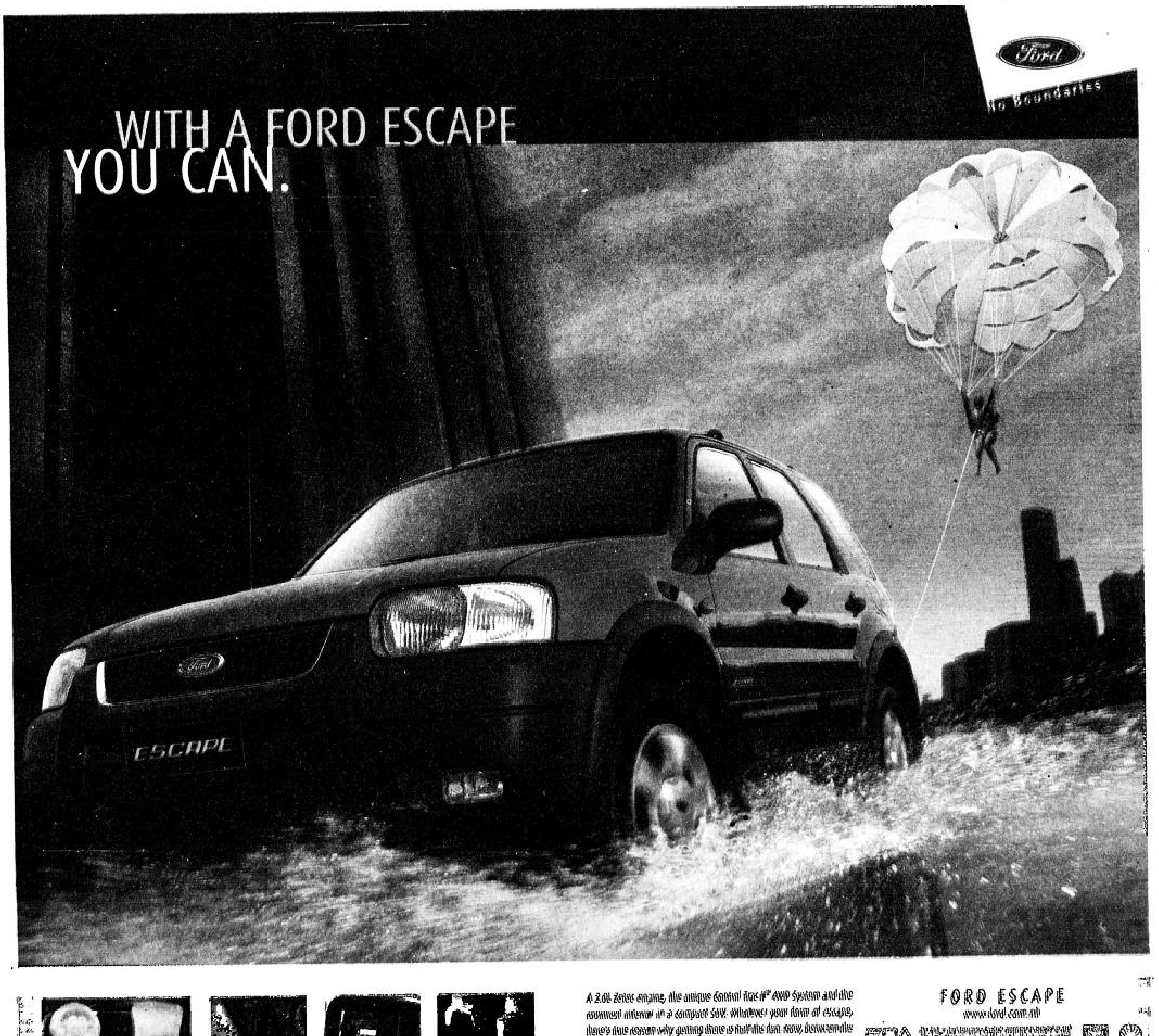
At the same time, Ms Macapagal is set to appoint Coyiuto as presidential adviser for capital market development.

Well-placed sources said the President yesterday offered the post to Coyiuto at the sidelines of the signing ceremonies on the enactment of the special purpose asset vehicle and procurement laws at the PSE.

In a separate interview, Coyiuto confirmed that he would accept the post and no longer run for PSE chair during the next annual PSE elections this March.

"We need a lot of changes to develop the capital market," Coyiuto said.

Coyiuto lost the post of PSE chair to Yuchengco last year as the latter won crucial votes from non-broker directors or private sector representatives who control majority of the PSE's 15-member board.



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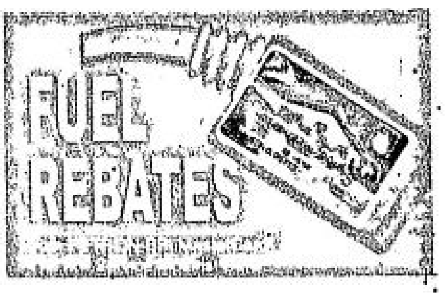
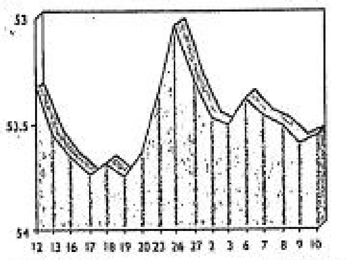


2002 economic growth seen at 4.3%

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 53.56 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 10, 2003

¥ 119.72 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 10, 2003

GOLD: $351.50-352.25

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 10, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Shares end higher on economic reforms

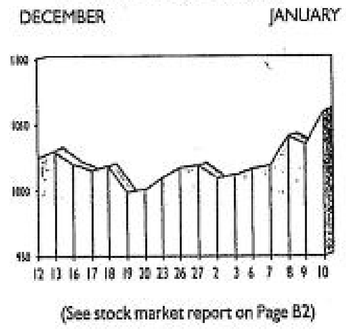
SHARES closed sharply higher yesterday as two major economic reforms were signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo at a ceremony on the trading floor of the stock exchange shortly before the session opened, traders said. ***(See related story on this page.)***

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 22.99 points, or 2.2 percent, at 1,058.30, its best close in nearly two months.

"The market appears to be reacting favorably to the steps being taken by President Macapagal in laying down the policy framework to ensure a

SHARES/ B2

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE ECONOMY was estimated to have expanded by 4.3 percent in 2002 on the back of robust farm production.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said yesterday that the growth in the country's gross domestic product for 2002 would be within the government's target of 4-4.5 percent.

The economic planning chief said that aside from improved crop production which grew by 4.9 percent, the industry sector likewise expanded by 4.3 percent, and services by 4.8 percent.

"We are expecting a very strong performance from the agriculture sector because of the better-than-projected harvest that came in during the fourth quarter instead of the usual season, which is the third quarter," Neri said.

From January to September, the economy grew by 4.1 percent. The growth was 3.8 percent in the third quarter alone.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee had projected a GDP growth of 4.2 percent to 5.2 percent for this year.

The IMF and the World Bank have projected a 4-percent GDP growth for the Philippines this year. The Fund believed that the economy would slow down to 3.8 percent in 2003 while the World Bank believed it would hit 4.3 percent.

NERI

Neri clarified that the 6-percent GDP growth for next year that he had projected was just a "dream" forecast, one that might not necessarily happen.

"A 5-percent GDP growth is more realistic but we will still strive for 6 percent. Anyway, reality starts with a dream," said the new economic planning chief.

Neri said he would try to push for better growth without resorting to pump-priming or expanding the economy with higher spending. He said the government would finance very crucial infrastructure projects with official development assistance (ODA) funds. However, he noted that with the modest inflation average of 3.1 percent in 2002, the government could afford to spend more.

Rival brokers do a Gloria, junk reelection bids

By Elena R. Torrijos and Doris C. Dumlao

TAKING their cue from President Macapagal-Arroyo, brokers and bitter rivals Vivian Yuchengco and Robert Coyiuto Jr. are sacrificing their ambitions to be reelected chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange this March in order to help revive the equities market.

In her speech yesterday morning at the PSE office on Ayala Ave., the President congratulated the two brokers for withdrawing their candidacies "to remove the poison in the stock market the way I renounced my candidacy for President to remove the poison from the body politic."

The squabble between Yuchengco, current PSE chair, and Coyiuto, former chair, have tarnished the image of the exchange and stymied or slowed down some reforms.

The former PSE chairs have also been asked to sign an agreement that they would not seek reelection in the elections of the exchange in March.

Past PSE chairs Felipe Yap, Wilson Sy and Roberto Z. Lorayes have already either signed the agreement or given their word they will not run while Trina Kalaw and Harry Liu have yet to indicate their stance.

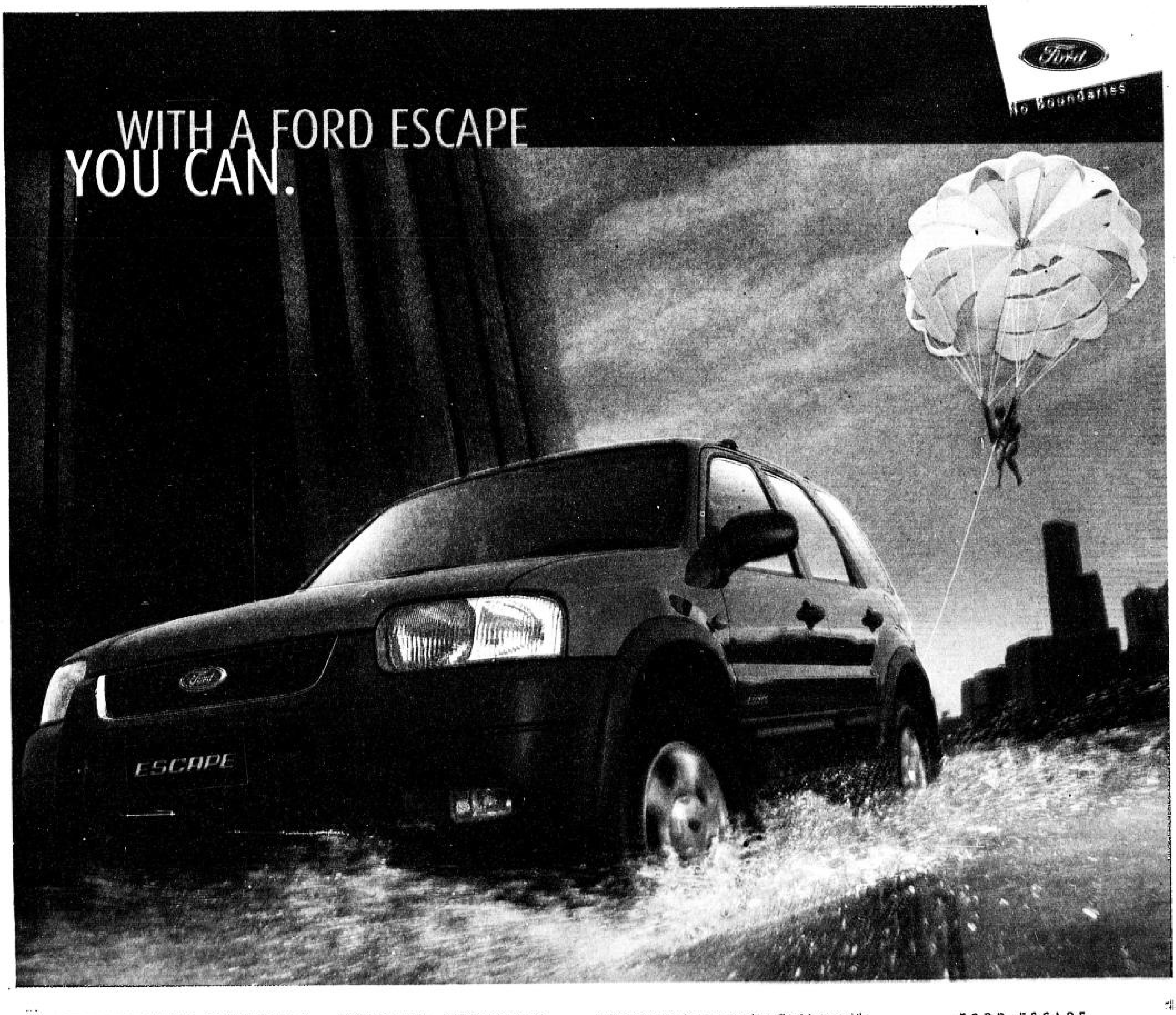
At the same time, Ms Macapagal is set to appoint Coyiuto as presidential adviser for capital market development.

Well-placed sources said the President yesterday offered the post to Coyiuto at the sidelines of the signing ceremonies on the enactment of the special purpose asset vehicle and procurement laws at the PSE.

In a separate interview, Coyiuto confirmed that he would accept the post and no longer run for PSE chair during the next annual PSE elections this March.

"We need a lot of changes to develop the capital market," Coyiuto said.

Coyiuto lost the post of PSE chair to Yuchengco last year as the latter won crucial votes from non-broker directors or private sector representatives who control majority of the PSE's 15-member board.



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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Manila to stay on US priority piracy watch list, says envoy

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WASHINGTON remains unhappy over the Philippines' efforts to curb transgression on intellectual property rights (IPR), specifically on the rampant sale of pirated copies of Hollywood blockbuster movies.

US Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for market access and compliance William H. Lash III said his government was "disappointed" with the Philippine performance.

Nearly a year after flying into the country to prod the government to intensify its enforcement of anti-piracy laws, Lash lamented the failure of the government to make some headway in the battle against bootleggers which, he said, resulted in $116 million in annual losses to American companies and $25 million in revenues to the government.

Lash noted that despite the high-profile crackdown on video pirates, there have so far been zero convictions because of the government's lack of follow-through efforts to penalize the transgressors.

Despite more than 280 arrests in the past year, he said Philippine authorities have yet to convict a single person for piracy.

"While Manila has laws safeguarding IPR, great laws on the books do not offset weak enforcement," he said.

Malacañang overhauled the Videogram Regulatory Board last year and installed action star Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. to head the crackdown on video piracy in order to add more media mileage to the anti-piracy campaign.

During the press conference, Lash held a pirated copy of the Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers in DVD format worth P100, weeks before its scheduled showing in the Philippines. He said video piracy in the country has reached the level of a "serious organized crime."

"It is not enough to catch street vendors, actual manufacturers have to be punished," Lash said, adding that it was relatively easy to pinpoint the pirates.

"But you have to show the people there are actual costs, actual deterrence, actual penalties to be paid for piracy," he said.

Lash said that due to the Philippines' inept enforcement of IPR rules, the country would likely remain on the priority watch list (which include the world's worst IPR violators) in the Special 301 report of the US Trade Representative Office.

Lash said that aside from costing revenues, poor IPR protection was also hurting the country's image to the international business community and affecting local performers and creative people.

Piracy in the Philippines went beyond DVDs but also included counterfeit pharmaceuticals, books and computer software.

Also, Lash urged the Philippine government to speed up its tariff liberalization and join the US government in pushing for worldwide cuts in tariffs. *With a report from AFP*

SEC clarifies list of 'Ponzi' operators

JOSE Tomas C. Syquia, director of the Securities and Exchange Commission's compliance and enforcement department, has clarified that ADL Marketing—a multi-level networking company selling high quality cookware and juicers—was not in the SEC list of suspected pyramiding firms referred to the DTI as reported in some newspapers.

In a letter to Antonio de Luna, president of ADL Marketing, Syquia said that one "concerned citizen" wrote SEC to inquire about "multi-level networking activity" of his company. Since the inquiry was about a consumer issue, Syquia's office referred the letter to the DTI.

"Please note that in our referral letter to the DTI, your company was never referred to as engaging in pyramiding operations," director Syquia clarified.

De Luna welcomed the clarification of the SEC director. He reiterated the commitment of ADL Marketing which has been in legitimate operation in the country since 1994, to make available only the highest quality cookware for a healthier lifestyle and to help the nation-wide network of dealers earn through hardwork and diligence.

ADL has a sterling track record in sales and quality products in major cities in Canada and the United States.

RP urged to forge FTA with US

AMERICAN giant apparel maker Polo Ralph Lauren said it was crucial for the Philippines to forge a free trade agreement with the US to ensure the continued access of local garments and textile, the country's second largest export, to a quota-free American market starting 2005.

In a presentation during the Confederation of Garment Exporters of the Philippines Integrated Clothing-Textile Sourcing Fair yesterday, Polo vice president Dock Rogers said the Philippines should leverage its close ties with the US in drawing up an FTA or bilateral trade accord with the US over the next two years.

Rogers said that an FTA would help the Philippines become a preferred alternative supplier of Polo apparel in a quota free market. "Quota free does not mean duty-free. With the abolition of quotas by end-2004, all garments imports in the US would be slapped 17.5 percent tariff," Rogers said.

With an FTA with the US, Rogers said the Philippines could get preferred duty rates for its US exports that it could maximize to its advantage over China. He noted that countries with an FTA with the US such as Singapore and Australia have enjoyed robust trade with the US over other countries.

He said an FTA would come in handy especially if the US imposes quota-like restrictions on China exports by 2005. He noted that the US was wary of China's potential to dominate the apparel market just like footwear. China's share in the worldwide footwear market swelled to 75 percent from 15 percent after quotas were lifted. Rogers said China's potential in a quota-free market could be gleaned from its $10 billion in annual garments exports to Japan, a non-quota market, which was more than three times the amount it sells to the US.

Though the Philippines does not have the scale or the textile manufacturing capability to become a major supplier like Mexico, South Africa and India, Rogers said the country would be a good alternative supplier for Polo. "We are definitely staying in the Philippines. We will not jump a country for a nickel but the government and the public should support efforts to make the industry more efficient," Rogers said.

The Philippines has become a key manufacturer of Polo over the last 10 years with 7 million units shipped out yearly, mostly from the factories of Philippine Luen Thai Holdings.

Aside from an FTA, Rogers said the Philippines should focus on improving predictability in the delivery to foreign buyers. He said Polo's main consideration in picking suppliers was process reliability or delivering goods within the prescribed specifications and period.

Other measures that the Philippines could do to mitigate the advantage of China in a quota-free market was the improvement in bureaucratic procedures specifically on their raw material and infrastructure that would contribute in lowering costs of production and ensuring on-time delivery.

In a related development, the Garments and Textile Export Board is negotiating for $200 million in annual compensation over the next two years from the US for the continuing losses suffered by the Philippines with the reforms the US made in the rules of origin in 1996. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Commercial banks' NPLs seen declining

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NON-PERFORMING loans of the country's commercial banks in October dropped to 16.36 percent of their total loan portfolio from 16.44 percent in the previous month.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Special Purpose Vehicle Act yesterday. The law provides tax incentives to asset management companies to encourage them to buy the banks' bad loans and assets. This is expected to help improve the financial viability of the banking sector.

The banking system's NPLs and bad assets are estimated to be worth about P600 billion.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura estimated that the SPV law would help reduce the banks' bad loans and assets by as much as P200 billion.

Data from the BSP showed that based on the formula used prior to the changes in the definition of NPLs in September, the bad loans ratio in October would have been at 16.88 percent which was still substantially lower than the 18.81 percent a year ago and 17.02 percent in September.

The BSP relaxed the definition of NPLs allowing banks to take out loans that they have written-off from their records. The central bank estimated that about P30 billion worth of loans earlier classified as NPLs were already written-off.

Bad loans fell by P1.27 billion in October to P265.57 billion compared to previous year month's level.

The BSP said this was attributed to intensified collection and restructuring activities of the banks.

Past due loans went down by P3.59 billion to P263.69 billion from P267.28 billion in September while restructured loans rose by P1.43 billion to P126.07 billion in October.

The banks' initiatives to sell their foreclosed assets led to a decline in the real and other properties owned or acquired by P690 million to P176.66 billion.

NPLs refer to accounts whose principal or interests remain unpaid for at least 90 days after due date.

"We believe that with the SPV law, investors will start coming in to help clean up the banking sector and improve the viability of the financial system," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

SPVs are companies that will buy part of the banking sector's about P600 billion in bad loans and foreclosed assets at a discount and sell them later.

Once these bad loans and assets are taken out of the banks' balance sheets, the government believes the banks will be able to lend more aggressively.

Import lib: Final nail in coffee growers' coffin

Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

(Third of a series)

LIPA CITY—According to studies conducted by the Figaro Foundation Corp., the Philippines was earning at least $150 million a year in coffee exports.

Coffee had always been one of the country's biggest dollar earners until 10 years ago.

About 200 years ago, the Philippines was on the list of the world's top coffee producers—as the fourth largest coffee-producing nation. And the biggest coffee producer used to be Lipa, Batangas.

Today, the Philippines produces only ,012 percent of the world's coffee supply and even imports more than what the country used to export.

The country now makes only around $500,000 a year from coffee and only 10 percent of the yearly harvest is exported.

The fact that coffee production has dropped is odd, considering that the local demand for coffee increases by 3 percent each year.

The local demand for the year 2000 was 60 million kilograms. Production, however, was a mere 45 million kg.

Pricing woes

Figaro's study cited two major causes of the death of the coffee industry.

One is that the local coffee growers had no control over their coffee prices. The world price and the big local buyers dictate the local price. As such, there is no way the farmers can guarantee themselves a profit.

The second major reason, according to the Figaro study, was the conversion of the once-rich coffee plantations into industrial, commercial or residential land.

Like in Lipa, most of the lands that used to be coffee plantations were transformed into commercial, piggery, poultry and subdivisions.

The technology problem was also cited as one of the causes of the death of the coffee industry. In many coffee countries, coffee production is largely mechanized, cutting down on time and labor cost.

Declining hectarage

In the Philippines, except for the larger coffee farms, nearly everything is done by hand, which is labor and time intensive. The smaller farmers cannot afford even the most basic machines like hullers.

Infrastructure is another problem. There are not enough farm-to-market roads. Thus, getting the yield to the markets is difficult.

As a result, many farmers whose families have planted coffee for generations have sold their land or have switched to planting more profitable crops.

In the last 10 years, the country lost about 80,000 hectares of coffee farms. Only about 120,000 ha of productive coffee land remain, mostly concentrated in the mountains of Batangas, Bukidnon, Benguet, Cavite, Kalinga-Apayao, Davao and Claveria.

The biggest problem has emerged with the lifting of the ban on coffee importation. Local farmers are worried that it may put a severe dent on the demand for locally produced coffee.

About 60,000 to 80,000 coffee families are left but their number continue to fall. Thus, the Figaro Coffee Co. created the Figaro Foundation Corp. whose thrust is to boost coffee production and provide aid to the last remaining coffee families.

Boosting production

"Our effort might look like a drop in a bucket," Chit Juan, Figaro director, said, "But we know that we will gain wider and stronger support if we just continue to revive the coffee industry. We started the move to revive the Barako in 1998. On April 2002, after four years of hard work, President Macapagal-Arroyo called us to Malacañang to start the National Task Force on Coffee." *(To be continued)*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, January 10, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	18	17.5	18	120,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	36	37	35.5	37	8,884,100
China Banking Corp.	625	625	625	625	1,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27.5	28	27.5	27.5	179,000
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	31.5	30.5	31	800,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10	10	9.8	9.8	11,000
Security Bank Corp.	11	11	11	11	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	5,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	100,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1230	1255	1230	1255	1,070
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	370,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	950	970	950	970	8,850
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.75	13.5	12.75	13.5	41,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.45	0.42	0.44	3,130,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	470	475	465	470	12,960
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.027	5,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.015	0.017	0.015	0.017	2,500,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.205	0.23	0.205	0.23	1,590,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	292.5	322.5	292.5	317.5	303,870
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	7,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.3	9.6	9.3	9.6	609,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.5	12.5	11.5	12.5	4,779,900
Petron Corp.	1.54	1.6	1.54	1.58	2,856,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	385,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.44	2.4	2.44	697,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	270,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	75,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.25	17	16.25	16.75	395,700
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.7	260,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58.5	59	58.5	59	56,100
San Miguel Corp. B	65.5	65.5	65	65.5	291,200
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.5	4.35	4.5	3,512,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.3	2.26	2.26	2,460,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.155	0.165	0.15	0.165	14,610,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	7,750,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	100,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	9.7	10.25	9.7	10	1,605,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	100,000
Ionics Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.8	0.82	1,170,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	773,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.57	0.59	0.57	0.59	1,680,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	18,220,000
Music Corp.	0.105	0.12	0.105	0.12	1,400,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	110,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	288,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.92	1.9	1.92	120,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	1,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	20	20	20	20	8,700
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	800,000
Manila Jockey Club	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12.75	14	12.75	13.25	1,573,800
Jollibee Warrants	16	16.5	16	16.5	11,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.75	4.95	4.7	4.95	8,072,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	230,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.125	0.135	0.125	0.135	3,430,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.92	1	0.92	1	16,870,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	2,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.85	5.1	4.85	5	9,692,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	205,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	3,030,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	800,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	10,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	450,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	620,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	6,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0026	0.0024	0.0026	59,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0026	0.0024	0.0026	14,000,000

DISCLOSURES

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has not yet been advised by Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp. of the approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the amendment to article 4 of its articles of incorporation extending its term of existence from Jan. 12, 2003 to Jan. 12, 2053.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. said that the construction and development of its new project known as Cityland Makati Executive Tower at 7652 Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Pio del Pilar, Makati City is ongoing.

* * *

UNION Cement Corp. appointed lawyer Ma. Allen Morallos-Arbis compliance officer effective Jan. 2.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings bought 1 million treasury shares at prices ranging from P4.90 to P4.95 per share in line with its re-purchase program.

* * *

PILIPINO Telephone Corp. signed a subscription agreement with Philippine Long Distance Telephone Corp. on Jan. 9 wherein PLDT subscribed for an additional 209,100 shares out of the 792,007 unissued shares Class I, Series J preferred stock of Piltel at a subscription price of P1,000 per share. ***Compiled by Armin Adina, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Jan. 10, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.953562	1.000000	53.544000
Japan	Yen	0.007992	0.008381	0.448800
United Kingdom	Pound	1.531897	1.606600	86.018400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.122266	0.128220	6.865400
Switzerland	Franc	0.685128	0.718494	38.471000
Canada	Dollar	0.614804	0.644745	34.522200
Singapore	Dollar	0.548276	0.574977	30.786600
Australia	Dollar	0.560015	0.576801	30.884200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.529408	2.652500	142.030300
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.254269	0.266652	14.277600
Brunei	Dollar	0.546704	0.573329	30.698300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022316	0.023403	1.253100
UAE	Dirham	0.259620	0.272264	14.578100
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.048700	56.151600
Argentina	Peso	0.287218	0.301205	16.127700
Brazil	REAL	0.288433	0.302480	16.196000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134604	0.141159	7.558200
India	Rupee	0.019924	0.020894	1.118700
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.250971	0.263193	14.092400
Mexico	New Peso	0.091364	0.095813	5.130200
New Zealand	Dollar	0.505493	0.530110	28.384200
Norway	Kroner	0.130311	0.145047	7.766400
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016427	0.017227	0.922400
South Africa	Rand	0.111632	0.117069	6.268300
Korea	Won	0.000808	0.000847	0.045400
Sweden	Kroner	0.109669	0.114099	6.157500
Syria	Pound	0.018515	0.019417	1.039700
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027711	0.029061	1.556000
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000828	0.000666	0.035100

Shares end higher . . .

From page B1

revitalized economy by the end of her term in 2004," A&A Securities research head Astro del Castillo told Dow Jones Newswires.

Ms Macapagal said she would not run for president in 2004 and focus instead on fixing the economy during the remainder of her term.

Blue-chip PLDT was among the most actively traded stocks, closing P25, or 8.6 percent, higher at P317.50.

"This early, foreign fund managers are now trying to fill up their baskets, and PLDT may be one of the blue chips they want to invest in," said Del Castillo. "PLDT was one of the worst performing stocks last year, but it appears it has reached bottom." AFP

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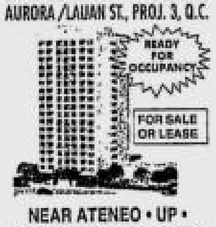

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QUEZON CITY

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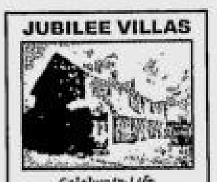

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QUEZON CITY

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(PDI-Jan. 4, 11, & 18 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

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WHEREAS, the herein described items/goods were separately imported on various dates at the Manila International Container Port, which up to the present no Customs Import Entry have been filed thereon respectively, or if such entry has been filed, no claim/adjudication was made thereto by their respective consignee/importer, or such rightful claimant within the period fixed by Law, to wit:

CONSIGNEE	DESCRIPTION	CONTAINER NO.	REG. NO.	ARRIVAL
PAULA FOODS	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	EMCU-5192074	EGP-033	4/06/02
MANU TRADING	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	KLFU-5927800	RCN-030	4/17/02
PAULA FOODS CORP.	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	MOLU-5117361	RCN-084	10/02/02
ROYAL CARGO AGENCIES	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	TRIU-8475263	RCN-066	8/02/02
ROYAL CARGO AGENCIES	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	MNLU-9720242	RCN-066	8/02/02
VALIANT QUEST	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-6020911	OPI-020	3/16/02
VALIANT QUEST	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-5962621	OPI-028	4/13/02
ASIA TIGER EXPRESS	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-594-0690	OPI-056	7/27/02
ASIA TIGER EXPRESS	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-5989350	OPI-056	7/27/02
ASIA TIGER EXPRESS	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-5947674	OPI-060	8/10/02
ASIA TIGER EXPRESS	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	OOLU-6007289	OPI-064	8/24/02
VALIANT QUEST	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	CRLU-3125698	RCA-011	3/13/02
VALIANT QUEST	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	MISU-8710136	RCA-014	4/03/02
VALIANT QUEST	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	MISU-8716427	RCA-016	4/17/02
ACL MLA. OFFICE	FROZEN-MEAT PRODUCTS	TRIU-8296817	RCA-034	8/14/02
ACL MLA. OFFICE	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	TRIU-8469893	RCA-034	8/14/02
ACL MLA. OFFICE	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	TRIU-8296777	RCA-034	8/14/02
ACL. MLA OFFICE	FROZEN MEAT PRODUCTS	CRLU-5188611	RCA-034	8/14/02

WHEREAS, the failure of the consignee/importer and such other rightful claimant to claim/adjudicate his/her importation shall be deemed to be a renunciation of his/her property rights in favor of the government, pursuant to Section 1801 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended by Republic Act 7651, and be auctioned after ten (10) days from the date of posting/advertisement.

SO ORDERED.

Manila International Container Port, Manila, Philippines, this 9th day of January 2002.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. FELIPE A. BARTOLOME**
District Collector of Customs

(PDI-January 11, 2003)

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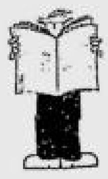

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National Power Corporation
GENERATION COMPANY 1

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID UNDER E.O. 40
AD NO. GENCO 1 2003-01

Bidding Date	February 3, 2003	Schedule A (10:00 a.m.)
	February 5, 2003	Schedule B (10:00 a.m.)
	February 7, 2003	Schedule C (10:00 a.m.)
Pre-bid Conference :	January 22, 2003	Schedule A (9:00 a.m.)
		Schedule B1 (9:00 a.m.)
	January 23, 2003	Schedule B2 (9:00 a.m.)
		Schedule C (9:00 a.m.)

The following manufacturers/suppliers/distributors, whether 100% local or at most 40% foreign-owned are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids to be opened publicly at 4th Floor, Conference Room, National Power Corporation GENCO 1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila.

a. Duly licensed individuals/Sole Proprietorship;
b. Partnership or Corporations;
c. Manufacturers/Suppliers/Distributors forming into a joint venture;
d. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).

SOURCE OF FUNDING: INTERNAL CASH GENERATION — **APPROVED BUDGET FOR CONTRACT TO BE BID:**

Schedule A

Inquiry No. 0111-011	Supply of labor services, materials, consumables supervision expertise and provision of tools/equipment for hauling and transport Diesel from BTPP to BCCPP	2 jobs	P 981,360.00
Inquiry No. 0206-030	Rental of two (2) units Dump Truck with minimum load capacity of 15 tons, 10 wheelers, double different and in excellent operating condition to be used at BCFTPP, Calaca, Batangas	3000 operating hours	1,500,000.00
Inquiry No. 0206-032	Air Circuit Breaker, S/P for 460 V Switchgear/MCC	5 sets	3,000,000.00
Inquiry No. 0212-008	Hydrazine Hydrate, Assay 35% N_2H_4 min., Liquid Form, Technical Grade, Packing 200 kgs/drum (drum should be of polyethylene plastic material)	40 drums	1,200,000.00
Inquiry No. 0212-009	Recirculation Valve for Boiler Feed Pump with Actuator & Accessories And Spare Parts	1 lot	5,265,000.00

Schedule B
(B1)

Inquiry No. 0212-022	S/P for Boiler Circulating Pumps, Manufacturerd by Hyward Tyler, consisting of 62 items	1 lot	11,090,889.00
Inquiry No. 0212-023	Supply of labor, materials, consumables, tools, equipment, test, commission and supervise the complete rehabilitation of the Bobcat Skid Steer Loader units	1 job	6,408,000.00

(B2)

Inquiry No. 0212-024	Various Boiler Tubes consisting of 20 items	1 lot	4,631,234.00
Inquiry No. 0212-025	Supply of labor, materials, consumables, tools, equipment, test, commissioning and supervise the complete Engine overhauling of Caterpillar Bulldozer Model D8-N Unit #1 with SN 5TJ01273	1 job	2,000,000.00

Schedule C

Inquiry No. 0212-026	Supply, installation commissioning and testing of at least one of the two (2) 22" dia. Knife-Gate Type Burner Shut-off Valve, complete with Conduit-Spool, Foster Wheeler Energy Corp.	2 assy.	1,900,000.00
Inquiry No. 0212-027	Wear Resistant Plate hardness of cladding material not below 650HV (54/55 HRC) cladding thickness 4mm, base plate 6mm, size 2.5m length x 1.8 m width	20 pcs.	1,640,000.00
Inquiry No. 0212-028	Repair of Varian ICP-MS Analyzer	1 job	2,600,000.00
Inquiry No. 0212-029	Spares of Generator Air Circuit Breaker, Manufactured by Brown Boveri, consisting of 9 items	1 lot	2,755,256.00

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained on the Procurement Section, Administration Division, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per Inquiry No. starting January 13, 2003. No bid documents will be issued or the date of bidding.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "Executive Order 40."

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

The corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality contained therein and accept the bids considered most advantageous to the corporation.

(Sgd.) **LORNA T. DY**
Manager
Professional Services Department

(PDI - Jan. 11, 2003)

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- Willing to learn & courteous
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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources
Regional Office No. 4
2nd Floor, ICC Building, NIA Complex
EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION FOR NGOs TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Regional Office No. IV-A invites Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) to prequalify and bid for services to implement community organizing work in the following bays under the Income Diversification Component of the Fisheries Resources Management Project (FRMP).

BAY	PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITIES
Calauag Bay	Quezon	Calauag
Northern Tayabas Bay	Quezon	Agdangan, Padre Burgos Sariaya

NGOs that are to be considered for prequalification preferably should have at least five years relevant experience on community organizing for livelihood development and coastal resource management in the provinces and areas mentioned above.

The general scope of work involves organization work to establish community-based organizations; continuing assistance to the community organizations to build up membership and develop leadership and capability in undertaking coastal resource management and micro-enterprise activities; and assistance in FRMP implementation at local levels.

Among the specific activities to be undertaken by the selected NGO includes:

1. Strengthening of fisherfolk associations and other self – help groups in the coastal communities to engage in income diversification and micro-enterprise activities;
2. Initiation of primary cooperatives to essentially become multi-purpose cooperatives, giving more attention to complementation of water – based and land based activities;
3. Assist BFAR in the conduct of education and training that is focused in mobilizing the organizational capability of their cooperatives to access external opportunities and potentials towards empowerment;
4. Assist BFAR in the conduct of LGU planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of various CRM concepts and best practices; and; institutionalization of such in the local development plans; and
5. Continue the unfinished scope of work by the previous contracted NGO in the said Bay.

Interested NGOs must submit notarized prequalification statements together with the required documents to the BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A which have jurisdiction over the areas where they are interested in working. Documents must be properly "tabbed" to correspond with each prequalification requirement and should be received not later than 5:00 PM on **January 27, 2003**. Attention: The Chairperson, Prequalification, Evaluation and Awards Committee. Forms for prequalification and list of required documents may be obtained from the BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A.

MS. ROSA F. MACAS – REGIONAL DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: BFAR IV-A 2nd Flr., ICC Bldg., NIA Road, NIA Compound,
EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City
CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS: 926-8616 (Telefax): 926-1901,
926-6071 to 79 Local 192, 193 & 194

BFAR Regional Office No. IV-A reserves the right to reject any or all bids as well as to waive any defect or informality to the submitted bid documents. It also reserves the prerogative to accept any bid it may consider as most responsive and advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) ROSA E. MACAS
Regional Director

(PDI – January 11 & 18, 2003)

BAGUIO WATER DISTRICT
"WE SERVE"

INVITATION FOR ACCREDITATION/REGISTRATION

The Baguio Water District is inviting all interested and qualified suppliers, traders, manufacturers and dealers to be accredited / registered with the Baguio Water District for the year 2003 for the supply of the following:

A. Pumps and Motors
  - centrifugal booster pumps, submersible turbine pumps
  - horizontal induction motors/submersible motors (5-150 Hp), etc.
B. Pipes and pipes fittings as HDPE, Pb, GI, BI, Brass fittins, O-rings, etc.
C. Chemicals
D. Motor Controls and other electro-mechanical parts and accessories
E. Construction materials
F. Vehicle, vehicle parts, lubricants
G. Water meters
H. Office suppliers and computers

Interested parties are requested to secure the accreditation / registration documents from the Purchasing Section, BWD Office, Baguio City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P300.00.

BWD PBAC (IN-HOUSE)

(PDI – January 10 & 11, 2003)

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City
Telephone No. 991-1556, 991-1557

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT (ZCWD) is inviting accredited suppliers of uPVC Pipes to submit bids for the supply of the following:

DESCRIPTION	QTY.	UNIT
uPVC Pipes, 250mm (10") x 6.00 meters Class 150, Series 8 B/S, with rubber rings	170	pcs.

Interested contractors may secure the "INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS" during office hours at the Records Section, 2/F, ZCWD Main Office Bldg., Pilar St., Zamboanga City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00.

Deadline for the submission of eligibility documents, bids & bid securities shall be on or before **JANUARY 31, 2003** at 10:00 a.m. at the above address.

The ZCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive minor informalities in the bids received, and to award the contract to the bidder whose bid, as evaluated by the PBAC, is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ARNULFO A. ALFONSO**
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI - Jan. 11, 2003)

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PERSON WHO CAN FLY
REMOTE CONTROLLED ITEMS.
MUST HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH
REMOTE CONTROLLED PLANES.

PLEASE APPLY PERSONALLY AT:
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ARTURO M. TAN, JR.

Peacefully joined our Lord and Mama Mary
on January 2, 2003 at the age of 47.

His wife **Lily**; children: **Arlyn, Alvin, Aiza, Andy, Aimee Vilma** and **Aldrin**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

May his memory live in our hearts forever.

Dominga Victorio Santiago

wife of **Dr. Teofilo S. Santiago** (†)
now peacefully rests in the infinite grace and goodness of our Lord
on January 9, 2003 at the age of 95.

Her bereaved sister and brother-in-law **Eliodora** and **Eduardo Simeon**; brother **Julian** (†); children and children-in-law **Rosa** and **Walfredo** (†) **Samson**, **Benilda** and **Juan** (†) **Navarro**, **Teresita** and **Juanito Reyes**;

Grandchildren and grandchildren-in-law **Greg** and **Trina**, **Rosanne**, **Manolette** and **Winnie**, **Didit** and **Vince**, **Ron** and **Anna**, **Lynne**, **Lou** and **Perry**, **Minette** and **Nonie**, **Susan** and **Noel**, **Toto** and **Sandra**, **Lian** and **Bill**, **Louie** and **Julie-anne**;

Great grandchildren **Andre, Bianca, Patricia, Lorenzo, Lawrence, Francis, Ysabelle, Miren, Miggy, Ana, Anya, Miguel** (†), **Abby, Eric, Mike, Nick** and **Alex**

request those whose lives she has touched to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Christ the King Mortuary, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 12, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"The Lord
is my
strength
and my
shield
in whom
my heart
trusted
and found
help.
So my
heart
rejoices;
with my
song
I praise
my
God..."

Psalm 28:7

Col. Jose M Jamora, Sr. (Ret) PA

Peacefully joined his Creator
on 09 January 2003 at the age of 78

His family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the
BJ Country Club
643 Brgy. San Jose, San Pablo City

Interment will be on Sunday, 12 January 2003 at the
San Pablo Memorial Park
Immediately after the 10:00 AM mass at the
BJ Country Club
643 Brgy. San Jose, San Pablo City

Estelita "Teling" Sazon Gumayan

of Banotac Nuevo, Iloilo & Las Piñas City
Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 10, 2003 at the age of 87.

Her loving husband, Engr. Exequiel Gumayan; children, relatives & friends request readers to pray for eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Sucat from January 10 to 15, 2003.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City on January 15, 2003.

ENGR. RODRIGO BRECIA BALANA

of Bacacay, Albay & Marikina City
25 February 1935 - 7 January 2003

Anne, Jojo & Andie San Gabriel; Weng, Jim, Drigo & Gell Main; Kokoy, Rose, Gelo, Ichi, Ren^2 & Rap^2 Balana; wish to thank all those who offered Masses, prayers & flowers, visited & kept vigil with us. Please join in our Papa's funeral rites on Sunday, 12 January 2003 at 10:00 a.m. in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina (Chapel 3).

"Ours for a while, God's forever."

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DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGNS

KEE CHUI HAR
"Daisy Kee"

Teacher
Born: November 8, 1909 - Died: January 8, 2003

She is survived by her children and children-in-law **Frankie** (†) and **Dra. Nancy Lim, Jon** and **Nica Tan, Ric** and **Francy Reyes Lao, Alonso** and **Betsy Machuca, John** and **Harvey Chua, Elizabeth Chua**; grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Ave. Interment will be at the Chinese Cemetery.

CLASSIFIEDS

ASSET DISPOSAL PROJECT
NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID
"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"
for the SALE of
FUEL BARGE "T-228"
DATE OF BIDDING: JANUARY 23, 2003

The National Power Corporation will receive sealed bids on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis for the sale of the items described below:

ITEM / DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
Lot 1 - One (1) Unit, FUEL BARGE (Non-propelled), "T-228" Material of Hull : Steel Length Overall (LOA) : 82.00 meters Length between Perpendiculars (LWL) : 81.26 meters Breadth (Molded) : 25.26 meters Number of Deck : Single Gross Tonnage (Approx) : 2,610 tons Net Tonnage (Approx) : 2,591 tons Fuel Barge Capacity : 40,000 barrels Date Launched : July 17, 1993 Shipbuilder Hull No. : 63	Batangas Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant, Calaca, Batangas	P 43,470,000.00
Lot 2 - One (1) lot, Unserviceable Heavy Equipment, consists of 3-units "Euclid" Dump Truck; 1-unit "Caterpillar" Wheel Loader; 1-unit "Hino" Dump Truck; 2-units "Terex" Payloader; 1-unit "Tadano" Crane; 1-unit "Ford" Firetruck; 2-units "Toyota" Forklift and 1-unit "HydraMac" Skidloader.	Batangas Coal Fired Thermal Power Plant, Calaca, Batangas	P 457,710.00

Interested eligible bidders may obtain bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00)** at the Asset Disposal Project (ADP) office, 3rd Floor, Building No. 1, National Power Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives at **2:00 PM on January 23, 2003** at the NPC Solanum, NPC Head Office. Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond of not less than ten percent (10%) of the total amount of bid. The Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation has concurred with the bidding process and clearance for the disposal was duly approved.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any informality, and to accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to the Government.

Deadline for the issuance of bidding documents is on **January 22, 2003**. For additional information, please call Asset Disposal Project at telephone nos. 922-3970 and 921-3541 loc. 5562 (c/o Mr. William F. Bautista), or e-mail us at adp@napocor.com.ph.

(Sgd.) **LEVI C. ARABELO**
Acting Head, Asset Disposal Project
and Bataan Nuclear Power Plant

(PDI--Jan. 9, 10 & 11, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Collection District II-B
Manila International Container Port

January 10, 2003

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 to 2610 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended, in relation to CMO 36-2001, there will be a SPECIAL PUBLIC AUCTION SALE to be conducted at the Manila International Container Port on **January 14, 2003** of the hereunder article in lot. Said goods shall be available for public viewing on **January 13, 2003.** For further inquiry, please contact MR. ISIDRO A. PRE, Chief, ACDD, Telephone Numbers 247-09-77 and 245-41-01 local 2283.

In the event of a failed bidding, for want of bidders or lack of an acceptable bid, the unsold lots shall be re-auctioned the next succeeding business day at the floor price reduced by 20%.

Lot No. 092-02 VARIOUS CONSIGNEES S.I. No. 07-02, 08-02, 10-02 and 11-02 (N.H.) 1st Advertisement "As Is Where Is" "Proceeds to be held in trust." Floor Price: Php 9,120,000.00	6,080 Bags, 50 kgs./bag Premium Rice Note: Only bidders with NFA licenses will be allowed to participate. Subject to actual counting before delivery. Location: North Harbor — 12 x 20' and 8 x 10' Containers

Registration Fee — Php2,000.00
Cash Bond — Php20,000.00
Payment — 50% downpayment and the remaining balance payable within forty-eight (48) hours for the winning bidder.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. FELIPE A. BARTOLOME**
District Collector of Customs

(PDI — January 11, 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The ***National Housing Authority*** is inviting ***Offers to Purchase a 104.80 hectare*** property, inclusive of ***1,843 row-houses***, on an ***"As Is – Where Is"*** basis, ***lock-stock-and-barrel*** at a base price of ***PhP 1 Billion.*** This property is known as the ***NHA-Calauan Housing Project*** located at ***Barangays Dayap & Santo Tomas, Calauan, Laguna.***

The property, covering ***Sites 1, 2 & 3***, comprised of ***7,472*** serviced lots. ***1,843*** housing units (row houses) are already constructed within Site 1. Lot sizes range from ***40*** to ***60*** square meters.

All lots are individually titled and are under the name of the ***National Housing Authority.***

Bidding Materials can be secured for a non-refundable fee of ***PhP200.00*** from the ***Calauan Housing Project Disposition Committee*** c/o the ***Commercial & Industrial Estates Department (CIED)***, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City. For inquiry, please call ***Ms. Evelyn V. Ramos, Manager, Sales Div., CIED or Arch. Susana V. Nonato, DAMO-SLB*** at the following Tel. Nos. ***CIED: (02) 923-0390, (02) 928-4561 local 302 & 303; SLB: (02) 922-9820; (02) 922-3319; (02) 928-4561 local 501 & 506.***

SCHEDULE:

a. *Pre-Bid Conference*	21 Jan. '03, 10:00 a.m. Operations Center, 3rd Floor
b. *Submission of Pre-Qualification Requirements*	13 Jan. to 28 Jan. '03, until 5 p.m. CIED, Mezzanine Floor
c. *Submission of Sealed Offers*	30 Jan. '03, 8 a.m. to 12 noon Operations Center, 3rd Floor
d. *Opening of Sealed Offers*	30 Jan. '03, 1:30 p.m. Operations Center, 3rd Floor

The Authority reserves the right to ***reject*** any or all others or any part thereof or to ***waive*** any required formalities and ***accept*** offers most advantageous to the interest of NHA.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Chairman
Calauan Housing Proj. Disposition Committee

PDI-Jan. 11 & 18, 2003

St. Scho High '83 reunion

St. Scholastica's College Manila High School Batch 1983 will hold its 20th Year Reunion today, January 11, 2003 at the Parish Social Hall of Sanctuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park. There will be a Thanksgiving Mass at 4:30 p.m. before the reunion proper.

For more information, call Jill at 631-9219 or Mylene at 536-8189.

Giant ring of stars found around Milky Way

SEATTLE—A newly discovered giant ring of stars on the outskirts of the Milky Way could be evidence of our galaxy's violent birth, astronomers said last Monday.

Two scientific teams saw the ring slowly circling outside the Milky Way, with perhaps 100 million to half a billion stars distributed around it. One commentator said it appeared to have been part of a smaller galaxy that was ripped apart by our galaxy's gravitational force.

"It's sort of like the smile on the Cheshire cat," said Bruce Margon of the Space Telescope Science Institute, who commented on the finding. "Everything else has disappeared, but this remaining, very well ordered wisp of stars is unmistakable...telling you almost surely this was originally a collected satellite galaxy."

The ring was detected by scientists working on the Sloan Digital Sky Survey, an international collaboration that is making a detailed map of one-quarter of the entire sky.

Looking for patterns as they mapped the heavens, the scientists found tens of thousands of stars they didn't expect to see at the outer edge of the galaxy, in the direction of the constellation Monoceros (The Unicorn).

Surprise finding

"We're beginning to see pieces of other galaxies coming into our galaxy, being torn apart and incorporated," Heidi Newberg of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute said.

"This ring of stars may be what's left of a collision between our Milky Way and a smaller, dwarf galaxy that occurred billions of years ago," said Brian Yanny of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.

Generally, stars are expected to be more numerous toward the center of our galaxy, thinning out toward the edges. So it was a surprise to find a millions of stars out by the fringe, Newberg said.

Galactic outsiders

Further investigation showed these unexpected stars were not part of the galaxy, but a separate structure outside it, held in a near-perfect circle by gravity.

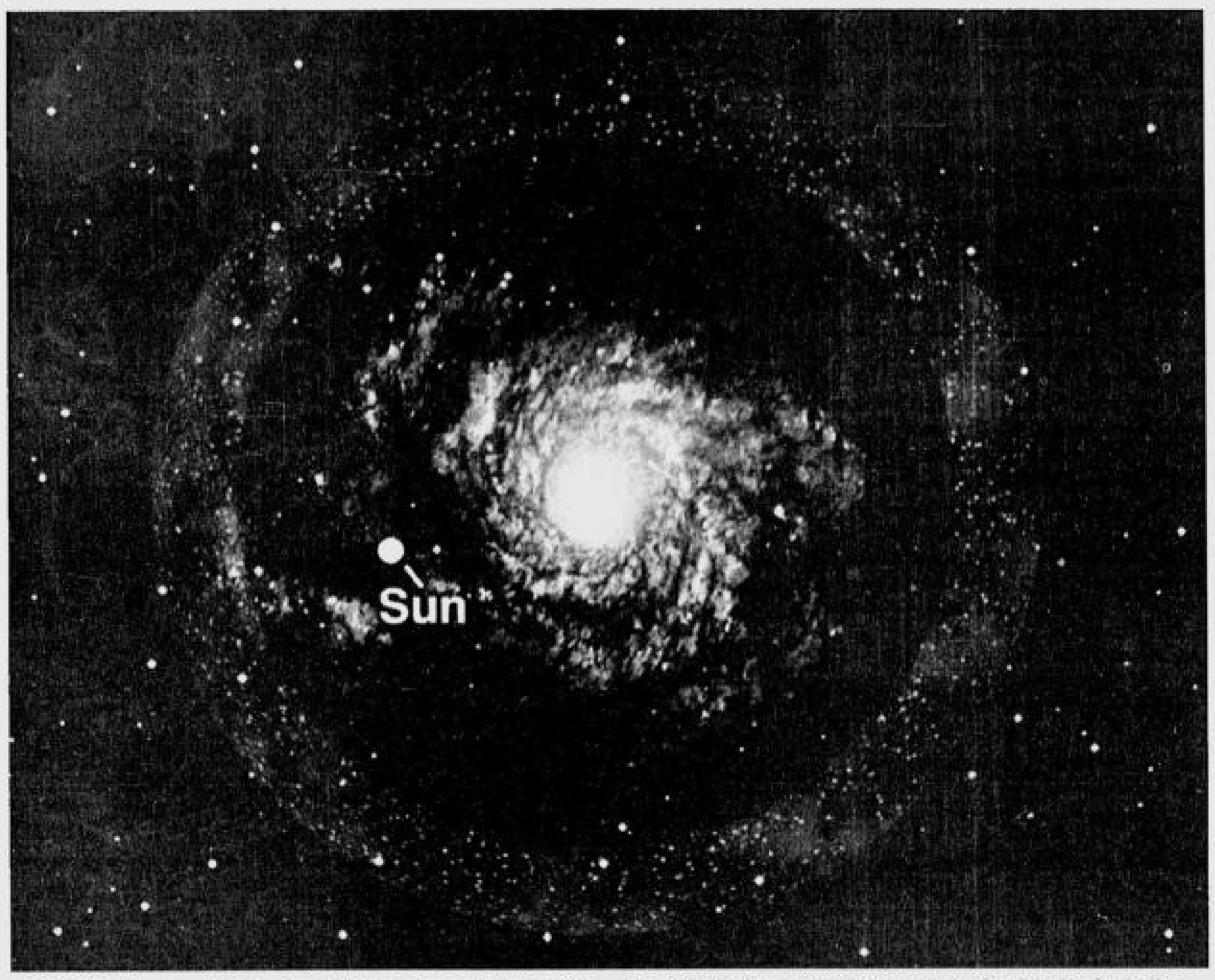
The ring is about 120,000 light-years across, some 30,000 light-years from our solar system. A light-year is about six trillion miles (10 trillion km), the distance light travels in a year.

The ring appears as a donut-like shape. It was never seen before because it was hidden behind stars and gas on the same visual plane as the Milky Way.

Looking out from Earth, some 30,000 light-years from the ring's outer edge, it was impossible to tell the difference between the galactic in-crowd and the outsiders of the ring.

Three-dimensional mapping from the Sloan Digital Sky Survey managed to sort them out.

This is not the first time scientists have found castoffs of our galaxy's creation. Similar structures have been found around the Milky Way, and scientists believe that as smaller galaxies were pulled apart, their remnants dissolved into streams of stars that linger around the larger, surviving galaxy. *Reuters*



A NEWLY discovered giant ring of stars on the outskirts of the Milky Way, shown in this undated artist's rendering, could be evidence of our galaxy's violent birth, astronomers announced Jan. 6, 2003. Two scientific teams saw the ring slowly circling outside the Milky Way, with perhaps 100 million to half a billion stars distributed around it.

REUTERS

Diet and exercise, or the knife?

By Rafael. R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

AT 5 FEET 4 inches, Donna M., then a 54-year-old mother of three and grandmother of five, was already obese at 190 lb. But she thought she was just being pleasantly plump and her love for chocolates and anything sweet didn't wane a bit. Before she knew it, she ballooned to 260 lbs in three years. For seven years, she tried all sorts of weight-reducing regimen to shave off the excess poundage and keep them off. At most, she was able to achieve temporary success. She would lose five pounds but easily gain them back with a single eating binge.

Donna's physician started to get alarmed because her blood pressure was starting to shoot up, and her blood cholesterol and sugar levels were elevated. If it were any consolation, her heart appeared to be in good shape, but with all her risk factors, it was only a matter of time before she developed a serious complication in the heart, brain or kidneys.

Donna was an athlete in high school, winning medals and trophies in volleyball and track and field. But at 64, she could not even bend her body to tie her own shoes, or walk uphill unaided. Her 3-year-old grandson could even walk faster than her.

She had difficulty traveling and had to be seated in business class when flying because coach seats were too narrow for her. Trying to fit in bus seats was a big challenge for her and a frequent source of embarrassment.

Bariatric surgery

While visiting her doctor-brother in the States, she came to terms with herself. It was fortuitous that her brother was affiliated with a medical group specializing in bariatric surgery that performs operations for the severely and morbidly obese patients who could not be helped anymore with conservative medical measures. The surgery greatly reduces the number of calories one's body can consume and absorb.

Donna felt ill for a few weeks after her surgery. Her appetite was significantly reduced, and she would feel nauseated whenever she overate.

Subsequently, she got adjusted to her new eating pattern, and gradually slimmed down to a fit 135 lb three years after her bariatric surgery.

She can now swim and play ball with her grandchildren when they come to visit.

Smaller stomach

Bariatric surgery entails restricting the size of the stomach and the length of the intestines, where nutrients are absorbed. Hence, the calories absorbed are limited, preventing deposition of the calories and weight gain.

Bariatric surgery is a radical type of surgery and is only reserved for "hopeless" cases. Such surgery would be a better option than living with the more serious complications of being morbidly obese, defined as weighing 100 pounds or more above the ideal weight despite a reasonable period of conservative medical treatment.

It took a while, however, before surgeons were able to come up with a reasonably acceptable procedure without serious longstanding side effects or complications.

Bariatric surgery had a bad start with intestinal bypass operations that initially gave weight-loss surgery a bad name. Modern versions of bariatric surgery are safer and more effective, and are becoming increasingly popular among jumbo-sized patients.

Recently, some well-trained local surgeons have started doing it.

Success rate

The American Society for Bariatric Surgery estimates that close to 60,000 weight-reduction operations were performed last year, up from 23,100 operations five years ago.

The most common operation, Roux-en-Y, is a type of stomach bypass surgery which has a long-term success rate of nearly 90 percent when combined with intensive counseling, support and nutrition education.

Success is defined as maintaining a weight loss of 50 percent or more of one's excess weight for up to 10 years.

The operation is considered a major one although in some centers abroad, they make it look so simple by doing it through a laparoscope, which entails only small incisions in the abdomen. In a few centers, they're even employing robotic surgery, making it look like child's play.

It has risks and complications, including blood clots, wound problems and even death. About 15 percent of patients experience complications, and one to two in 200 patients die because of the surgery.

But the benefits significantly outweigh the risks. In addition to sustainable weight loss, bariatric surgery can rapidly reverse Type 2 diabetes, improve heart function and blood cholesterol levels, correct breathing problems like sleep apnea, reduce blood pressure, improve the quality of life and lower health care costs, disability and the risk of premature death.

Productivity is tremendously improved and many patients whose weight had kept them from working or taking part in physical and other activities are able to go back to their jobs, exercise regularly and maintain active social lives.

The surgery really offers a big boost to one's overall quality of life and many who underwent the procedure said they wish they had done it earlier.

Sexual interest and function are improved in both males and females. In many women who were infertile because of hormonal problems, conception had been reported after surgery.

There was also an improvement in self-image and self-esteem. Those who previously had depression showed clinical improvement.

Three versions

There are three versions of bariatric surgery. Two involve just greatly reducing the size of the stomach, but not changing the small intestines where nutrients are absorbed. People become full after a few bites of food, but everything they eat is absorbed.

The problem with this kind of procedure is that little by little, people can eat more and more at a time and stretch out the surgically created stomach pouch, allowing the lost weight to return.

The third type, the Roux-en-Y, is now the recommended type of bariatric surgery. It reduces the size of the stomach to a volume of two tablespoons, constricts the passage between the stomach and small intestine and bypasses a large section of the small intestine, minimizing absorption of the nutrients.

Patients are given food supplements to make sure they don't become deficient in some types of essential vitamins and minerals.

Roux-en-Y comes from the restructuring of the small intestine to form a Y-shaped structure. One arm of the Y carries digestive juices while the other carries food. The two arms come together farther down the intestine where digested food can be absorbed.

Ideal candidate

Who is the ideal candidate for surgery?

Surgical weight reduction is limited to those who are extremely obese, with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or more, or 35 for those with medical complications caused by obesity such as diabetes or heart failure.

Psychological evaluation, usually performed prior to surgery, is deemed critical to the success of the procedure.

Dr. Elliott Goodman, chief of bariatric surgery at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, says, "People with severe untreated depression and eating disorders are not good candidates for surgery. Patients have to be prepared to make drastic lifestyle changes. And they must not have an uncontrolled eating disorder. If they binge after surgery with a stomach the size of an egg, they can rupture the staples and die."

Counseling is therefore an important component of the surgery, Dr. Goodman says. He notes that many morbidly obese people have been sexually or physically abused, and use their weight to hide from the world. Once that weight is lost, they may feel threatened and defenseless without therapy.

Diet and exercise are surely less painful ways to lose weight. But when these no longer work, the morbidly obese can always surrender themselves to the corrective, albeit painful and expensive wisdom of the knife.

CHEESE
CHOCO
JED E.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Patient noncompliance: Dangerous and costly

By Arvin Reyes
and Alessanda Dela Cruz
Contributors

THERE are patients who forget to take their medicine. What they do not realize is medication noncompliance or the failure to take drugs on time and in prescribed dosage, could be as dangerous and costly as their illness.

Unsuccessful treatment is the most logical result of noncompliance. Worse, it could even lead to death of patients. In the United States, 125,000 cardiovascular patients die each year because of noncompliance.

For chronic diseases such as cardiovascular illnesses, the key toward a successful treatment is patient compliance. Missed doses of a cardiac drug can lead to arrhythmia and cardiac arrest. Even the best treatment plan fails without patient compliance.

Barriers to patient compliance

Studies show that only about 50 percent of patients who consult their doctors take their drug as directed. Experts say that this is a result of the patient's forgetfulness. This is more appropriately regarded as the patient's denial of his illness. The patient does not want a long-standing reminder of his illness. The cost of medication proves to be another barrier to patient compliance.

Noncompliance also deeply affects the law of supply and demand of hospitals and other health institutions. Noncompliance leads to 10-25 percent of hospital and nursing admissions. In the Philippine setting, where patients seek for government-funded hospitals, the health care budget is too tight and spread too thinly. If only patients comply with their medications, physician visits, diagnostic tests and other unnecessary treatment could be avoided.

Other results of noncompliance include worsening of quality of life and additional burden on the pocket. For example, a missed dose of prescribed antihypertensive drug could lead to serious heart failure or death. And these more serious diseases could be just too costly.

Improving compliance

There are many ways to improve patient compliance. Studies show that it is crucial for the patient to have a good relationship with his physician. In this way, patients could entrust his fears and expectations for better compliance.

For an average Filipino worker, cost of medication is one of the major barriers to patient compliance. Big pharmaceutical companies try to manufacture quality but affordable drugs. These companies have manufactured a wide range of products including those needed to treat cardiovascular diseases, the leading cause of death in the country.

Cholesterol-lowering drugs

Cholesterol-lowering drugs such as statins, work to block the body's production of cholesterol. It significantly reduces the incidence of heart attacks and strokes even in patients with average cholesterol levels. However, these drugs are also too costly. Thus, patients tend to not comply with their medications as well.

Simvastatin, one of the most scientifically documented statins, show cost-effective clinical benefits for cardiovascular disease patients. Patient compliance is expected to improve with Therapharma's introduction of an affordable brand of simvastatin.

One welcome development with the introduction of Therapharma's cholesterol-lowering simvastatin is the rolling back of prices or additional patient discounts for similar drugs by other pharmaceutical companies. It is hoped that more multinational companies will follow this example and reduce their prices of drugs needed to treat serious cardiovascular illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes and elevated cholesterol levels. This will benefit a lot of patients suffering from cardiovascular ailments which is now the leading cause of deaths in the Philippines.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Science 2002 in review

By Massie K. Santos

(Conclusion)

HERE is the second part of a list of advances in science last year that provoked discussions in religious and political circles.

Sequenced genomes

Many genomes were sequenced last year, among them the house mouse *Mus musculus*, rice *Oryza sativa ssp. Japonica*, the African mosquito *Anopheles gambiae* that carries malaria, and the malaria parasite *Plasmodium falciparum*.

Each genome sequenced is being compared to the human genome as scientists try to find similarities and ultimately a reason for the continued existence of so-called junk DNA. Of more interest though is that an organism's physical size doesn't always correlate with its genomic size.

The human genome is made up of 3,100 mega base pairs (Mbp) and is 30,000 genes long. In contrast, the fugu fish, long the bane of many adventurous diners of Japanese cuisine, is made up of 365 Mbp and has 31,000 genes.

The US National Human Genome Research Institute has recently approved funding on the sequencing of the following genomes: chicken, chimp, cow and dog.

Stem cell research

After all the debate last year whether or not stem cells should be taken from unwanted embryos (with their parents' consent) and used for scientific research in the United States, the Bush administration laid down the law. Scientists could only use the 64 stem cell lines already in use—some from mice, others from adult stem cells. Developing more lines from unwanted human embryos was out of the question.

This year two things became clear:

- Adult stem cell lines can't make all the cells embryonic stem cells can.
- Of the extant cell lines, only about six can actually be used.

Scientists say six cell lines aren't enough to work with considering the diversity of the genetic makeup in the human race.

Another problem is that over time, the extant cell lines gradually lose their ability to produce cells that can be assigned any function, which means that the stem cell lines won't be living up to their name for much longer.

Some scientists have already moved to other countries like Great Britain where stem cell research isn't restricted by the government. To keep them at home, the US National Institutes of Health has recently announced that it would not penalize scientists working with stem cell lines not approved by the government; they just won't fund the research on these other lines.

Cloning

This year saw the successful cloning of a cat, rabbits and maybe even a human.

In 2001, fertility expert Dr. Severino Antinori and Clonaid's chief scientific officer Dr. Brigitte Boisselier (Ph.D. in biochemistry) announced their separate intentions to produce the first human clone by the end of the year. They didn't meet that deadline.

Clonaid stayed out of the limelight for the next several months, surfacing only when Antinori announced in late November that he expected a cloned human baby to be born in January 2003. Clonaid then said it had a patient of its own who was pregnant in South Korea.

Then the day after Christmas, Clonaid announced the birth of the first human clone, Eve.

Radio news broadcasts quoted the grandmother of the infant as saying that the baby looked exactly like the mother, which should be expected, given that Eve is a clone of her American mother.

[Last week, Clonaid announced the birth of another cloned baby, this time to a lesbian couple.]

With the world awaiting scientific evidence of this claim, all eyes are now on Clonaid and the Raelians, a religious organization that believes aliens cloned humans 25,000 years ago and was thus responsible for the Earth's human population. Clonaid is funded by the Raelians. More cloned babies are supposed to be born in the next few weeks, it says.

With cloning techniques still to be perfected, will any of these children live to see their first birthdays? After all, for every Cc the cat, there are hundreds of failed cloning attempts.

To that end, Hans Scholer at the University of Pennsylvania published a paper earlier this year that connected a clone's failure to develop a gene called Oct4, which gets misplaced or is triggered at the wrong time in clones.

That's one story to look for this year.

Carabao agency gets ISO certification

By Charles E. Buban

IT'S quite usual for private companies and organizations to secure an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) but not for a government agency promoting the development of carabaos.

An agency like the Philippine Carabao Center, which has the potential to alleviate the lives of Filipino farmers nationwide, needs to have all the tools and confidence to effectively perform its duties.

Securing a certification—particularly the ISO 9001:2000—is the obvious but very challenging goal for the agency.

"Perhaps, we are the first (government) agency to go for this goal. But apart from thinking world class, what we are putting here is a system that we or any body can evaluate and clearly tell if this agency is performing or not," said PCC executive director Libertado Cruz, who expects the awarding of the certification early this year.

Close review

Achieving certification requires a close review and usually revisions in an organization's quality manual, procedures, work instructions and forms.

The PCC has done such proper documentation and evaluation of its system and now seeks an independent body to guide it in every phase of this rigorous procedure.

This was the reason the PCC teamed up with Joseph Server and Associates Inc., which provided training and acted as a consultant.

"Achieving ISO certification lets an organization know how its quality systems measure up against others. Our team brings to them the technology and straightforward approaches, the 'can do' culture and marketing strategies," explained JSA president Joseph Server.

3-million carabaos

The PCC, an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture, is tasked to improve farmers' income, nutrition and general well-being through the enhancement of carabao's potentials as a source of draft power, meat, milk and hide.

Though farmers in most irrigated, rice-producing areas have shifted to small hand tractor, reality remains that majority of them cannot totally do away with the draft carabaos—now numbering more than 3 million.

"If carabaos are no longer used for work in this condition, then the animals have to be improved from being a mere source of draft power to a producer of meat and milk," explained Cruz.

The PCC, through various projects and programs, endeavors to help Filipino farmers by providing them with the best option to improve their carabaos and ultimately develop carabao-based enterprise.

Cruz cited that through gene improvement the agency can breed a dairy type of carabao which can produce an average of 8 liters of milk a day for more than 300 days.

"Imagine our farmers building a stable dairy industry. We could build an economy based on this. Also we can harness the potential source of genetic materials and technologies that may help other Asian countries," he explained.

Additional income

The farmers need additional income to supplement what they earn from crops according to Cruz. "This is the very reason carabao development is needed."

The Carabao Development Program is a very important socioeconomic program that addresses poverty alleviation of farmers, nutrition improvement of their families, income equity/distribution and people empowerment," explained Felomino Mamuad, PCC deputy executive director.

Right now, the PCC promotes carabao development by carrying out these activities and services:

- Produces genetically superior buffalo germplasm for eventual distribution to breeding centers, farmer associations and cooperatives to carry out genetic improvement
- Conducts training for technicians to carry out genetic improvement
- Helps develop carabao-based enterprise
- Develops technologies and helps assess and formulate policies leading to a more productive carabao industry.

The Clone Wars: Episode 1

DISCOVER

Massie K. Santos

AS I write this, Eve's parents have refused to have their week-old daughter undergo DNA testing to prove she really is an exact genetic clone of her mother.

Scientists all over the world who have been demanding proof of Clonaid's successful attempt to clone a human being are now going around saying "I told you so; she's a fake."

Right now I'm not actually sure if the parents themselves decided against the tests, or if "Your Holiness" (per his request on CNN) Rael stepped in and decided for them.

Either way, says Brigitte Boisselier, Clonaid's scientific director (should I call her Doctor for her Ph.D. or Your Eminence for her bishopric with the Raelian movement?) says the parent's refusal to have the tests done is understandable, what with having their identities revealed to the world and enduring the media onslaught. Really though, does anyone today remember the name of the first test-tube baby born in the 1970s?

Perhaps the parents of cloned baby No. 2 will be less wary of becoming household names for a few years and allow their daughter to undergo the DNA tests that will prove Clonaid's claim one way or another.

Duped by Clonaid

Meanwhile, Michael Guillen, the independent news reporter who was supposed to provide the DNA tests that show Clonaid is successfully producing human clones, now admits he may have been the company's victim in their scheme to bring attention to the Raelians. This despite the fact that he apparently approached several news organizations months earlier to try and sell them exclusives on the story of the first Clonaid baby.

Ian Wilmut and every other scientist involved in cloning experiments always talk about the failure rate—that for every Dolly there are hundreds of failed attempts.

Did anyone catch the interview where Boisselier said Clonaid had 300 cloned embryos and Eve was the first one born? Boisselier said the other embryos were all equally viable; none were damaged, defective or destroyed, and all were being frozen for future use.

Granted that she has said before that there were so many failed attempts to clone animals because scientists don't know as much about animals as they do about the human body. Still, a 100 percent success rate at producing cloned (human) embryos is unbelievable. I guess she thought so, too, because days later she said not all the embryos were viable and that 10 embryos were implanted but only five babies have been/will be born.

Decade for genetics

I agree with Rogelio Tan of the Philippine branch of the Raelian movement—this is definitely the decade for scientific progress and achievement in the field of genetics. I think my bias on the subject is pretty obvious by now given the number of times I've written about genomes that have been sequenced, developments in stem cell research, and what all these mean.

I believe that by the end of this century the quality of human life will be greatly improved by new therapies for genetic diseases, and treatments at the genetic level for AIDS, cancer and everything else under the sun.

I believe that Christopher Reeve will walk again and Michael J. Fox will be able to spend quality time with his children instead of having them count how long it takes his hand to stop shaking after he takes his medication.

Media coverage

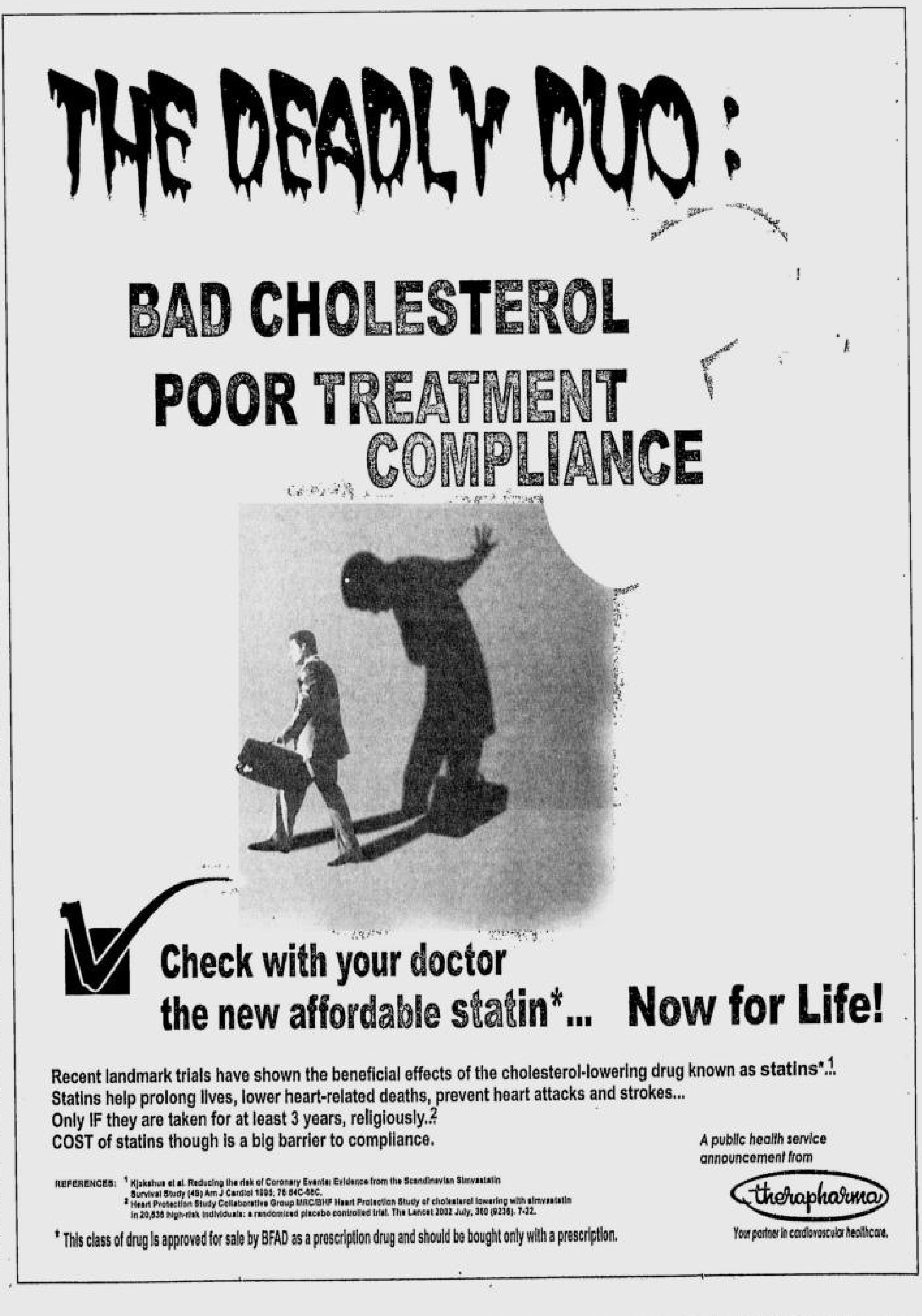
But looking at the events of the past two weeks, and the number of times the word "Clonaid" has been read or said online, on TV and in print, I find myself in complete agreement with Arthur Caplan, director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, and his rant against the extensive media coverage given this story.

For a scientist like Boisselier, who has never shown any background experience in this field (papers published, lab experience, etc.), to get as much attention as she has without proof that she, or anyone in Clonaid for that matter, has actually cloned a human being is amazing.

Worse, with all the media attention, the Raelians have managed to win over new converts and got more funding, politicians everywhere are moving forward on banning cloning in all forms, which affects stem cell research, and no one's paying attention to the new scientific discoveries that are backed by years of research and present claims that can be proven.

Will this go down in history as the biggest scientific fraud of all time (unless cold fusion takes the prize)? We'll talk again after the next three cloned babies are born and one of the families (hopefully, finally) agrees to the DNA testing.

(E-mail your comments or questions to massie@massie.com.)



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REFERENCES: [1] Kjekshus et al. Reducing the risk of Coronary Events: Evidence from the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) Am J Cardiol 1995; 76 64C-68C.
[2] Heart Protection Study Collaborative Group MRC/BHF Heart Protection Study of cholesterol lowering with simvastatin in 20,536 high-risk individuals: a randomized placebo controlled trial. The Lancet 2002 July, 360 (9326). 7-22.

* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang** ● *Assistant Editor* **Stella O. Gonzales**

Noisy workplace: A problem no one hears

By Tessa R. Salazar

ALMOST seven in 10 Filipinos working in "traditionally noisy workplaces" are hearing impaired or are suffering from various degrees of hearing loss.

This was one of the findings of a national study on deafness involving 3,262 workers in 29 "noisy" establishments in different parts of the country.

The study, conducted by the University of the Philippines College of Public Health, also found out that the 29 establishments surveyed registered noise levels between 90 and 114 decibels.

Ear experts have warned that prolonged exposure to noise above 90 decibels is potentially dangerous for the ears.

The study also revealed that only 50.2 percent of the study participants actually used their earplugs, 18.6 percent used earmuffs, and 9.8 percent used other forms of ear protection.

Earplugs and earmuffs reduce noise by 25 to 30 decibels.

High-risk places

Some of high-risk establishments are airports, power plants, refineries, steel factories, metal fabrication plants and small-scale industries using heavy machinery.

Most airports and small-scale industries in the Philippines were found to be within residential zones, reinforcing the belief that noise pollution affects not only the workers but also people living in nearby communities.

The 29 establishments surveyed were located in Metro Manila, Isabela, La Union, Zambales, Benguet, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Cebu and Iligan. It was conducted from August 2001 to May 2002.

The study was led by Dr. Benjamin Vitasa of the UP College of Public Health and was funded by the Department of Health's Essential National Health Research Policy Development and Planning Bureau. Other team members were ear specialists Dr. Generoso Abes and Dr. Norberto Martinez, 30 physicians, 12 audiologists and eight researchers.

Of the 3,262 workers surveyed, 27 percent said they had previously worked for another company with high levels of noise.

The study, however, failed to determine the study participants' hearing status before their current employment.

"Not all companies perform preemployment audiograms. They might have started working in that place with a prior hearing problem," Martinez said. "That's why we strongly advocate a preemployment audiogram."

Eleven percent of those surveyed said they had been working in noisy workplaces for one to five years.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Maximum noise levels

The permissible noise exposure levels set by the Department of Labor and Employment is eight hours per day for noise up to 90 decibels, six hours a day for 92 decibels, and four hours a day for 95 decibels. Workers can be exposed to noise measuring 97 decibels for only three hours a day, to 100 decibels for two hours, to 102 decibels for 1.5 hours, to 105 decibels for one hour, to 110 decibels for half an hour, and to 115 decibels for only 15 minutes.

Beyond these prescribed levels and duration, experts believe permanent damage to hearing would occur.

"Research has shown that even at 85 decibels, exposure for longer than eight hours is already dangerous. Beyond eight hours, you should wear ear protection," said Dr. Martinez.

He also said that if the safe allowable exposure for 85 decibels of noise is eight hours and for 90 decibels is four hours, then exposure to noise at 95 decibels should only be for two hours and at 100 decibels only for one hour.

"Normally, the maximum intensity that the ear can tolerate corresponds to an intensity level of 120 decibels," said Martinez.

Soft, loud noise

The sound of rustling leaves is equivalent to 20 decibels. A quiet whisper three feet away is 30 decibels, while a normal conversation is 60 decibels. Loud singing three feet away is 75 decibels.

A pneumatic drill three feet away registers 115 decibels, while a chain saw three feet away measures 117 decibels.

An amplified rock concert six feet away measures 120 decibels, while a jet plane taking off 100 feet away registers 130 decibels.

Workers' medical tests

Dr. Melba Y. Sacro of the Bureau of Working Conditions at the Department of Labor and Employment said that of 800,000 registered establishments in the country, only about 1,000 to 2,000 submit their required annual medical reports for its employees.

Based on the Bureau's reports from 1991 to 1996, noise was one of the most commonly reported physical hazards in the workplace.

The UP study concluded that hearing loss due to occupational noise exposure is one of the most prevalent maladies today.

It is also one of the easiest problems to ignore, because the symptoms are not visible and the condition worsens gradually over time.

Hearing loss in the workforce, the study said, has resulted in long-term human and economic consequences, which is especially regrettable since noise-induced hearing loss is almost always preventable at relatively little cost.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Cooking method, not food itself may be culprit behind diseases

WASHINGTON—It may not be what you eat, but how you cook it, that affects whether food causes heart disease, diabetes and other conditions, researchers in the United States have reported.

A new study shows that cooking at high temperatures—frying, grilling and even microwaving—creates compounds that are associated with disease when they are found in the body.

Foods cooked through low-temperature methods such as boiling and steaming do not contain as many of these compounds, the team at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York found.

While the findings do not discount the benefits of a healthy diet low in fat and sugar, they may help explain why some people who stick to such a diet continue to suffer from heart disease and diabetes, said study leader Dr. Helen Vlassara.

AGEs, the culprit

The culprits are called advanced glycation end-products, or AGEs. They are made by the interactions of sugars, fats and proteins, and form quickly when food is cooked at high temperatures.

"These are substances that are forming spontaneously in our body from glucose reactions," Vlassara said. "The higher the glucose is, the higher the products will be. Diabetics have a lot more, and they are highly toxic."

Vlassara and her colleagues said AGEs can irritate cells, causing them to produce proteins that trigger inflammation, such as C-reactive protein.

"We always tend to cook our food under high heat. And because most foods consist of proteins, lipids and sugars, those reactions are accelerated when we (use) high heat for a long time. We end up absorbing those," she said.

Tasty and brown

This kind of cooking produces tasty foods, Vlassara said.

"They make the food taste good, or make it look good—by browning it," she said.

Animal products rich in fat are the worst culprits, she said.

Her team studied 24 diabetes patients, giving them identical diets that differed only in how the food was prepared.

"The diets that we tested and gave to patients...are those recommended for diabetics," Vlassara said.

But where one group got grilled tuna, another got poached tuna, for example. The poached tuna would presumably be lower in AGEs as it was cooked at lower temperatures.

There were clear differences in the blood of the patients, although it was too soon to tell whether there were health benefits, Vlassara said.

Inflammatory chemicals

Those eating the high-AGE diet had more AGEs in their blood, and also had higher levels of inflammatory chemicals such as tumor necrosis factor and C-reactive protein.

These inflammatory chemicals are linked with the progression of heart disease and the damage caused by diabetes—such as blindness, nerve damage and damage to organs such as the kidney.

In other studies on animals, Vlassara said a low-AGE diet helped prevent the development of type-I diabetes, which is caused when the body mistakenly attacks and destroys the pancreatic cells that make insulin.

Reuters

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Swelling after extraction

MY friend had her tooth pulled and her face swelled. I am due to have some teeth pulled because the orthodontist recommended it. I don't want my face to look like I have mumps. What can I do?

Brandie F.

Take anti-inflammatory medicine such as ibufrofen or mefenamic acid. This will prevent your body from sending certain chemicals to the extraction site and prevent your cheeks from swelling.

You should also apply ice packs 20 minutes on and off on the cheek of the affected area and continue to do so for two hours. Biting on a gauze using adequate pressure will prevent blood from oozing and promote faster healing.

Prevent secondary infection through salt water rinses two times a day starting on the second day until the gum closes totally. Adequate rest and nourishment through a soft diet are equally important.

(The author is a cosmetic and general dentist licensed here and the United States. Your questions are welcome qt dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

RP does well in int'l math competitions

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

ALTHOUGH the average Filipino student languishes near the bottom in many international surveys of mathematics and science proficiency, we have excellent minds we can be proud of.

Samuel Timothy Dy (from St. Stephen's High School and now a physics major at the Ateneo de Manila University) received honors from the most prestigious competition of them all—the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) held in the United States last July. Our national team, by the way, has been coached by Dr. Jose Marasigan since 1987—the first year our country participated in the IMO.

Aside from the IMO, there are other regional brainfests, like the Australian Mathematical Competition (AMC). The Philippines has done quite well here, and to this day I still keep in touch with a past winner, Glen Ong of Xavier School, who from time to time updates me on our performance vis-à-vis other nations.

Last year two of the top placers were from the Philippine Science High School. Carlo Nerecena and Leo Sambayan were among the top 14 (from among 490,000 participants) in the Intermediate level, equivalent to Grades 9 and 10 in the Australian education system. A total of 39 countries participated in the AMC last July, including Brunei, Bulgaria, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Australia.

Different mechanics

However, the mechanics of the AMC are different from the IMO. Our teams have to go to the IMO site, which changes annually, thus adding to the grueling training the perpetual worry over the teams' plane fare. (Sponsors are welcome!)

The AMC is logistically more accessible. Since it is an open scholastic competition, testing is held simultaneously on a global scale. Last year, the Philippine test site was at the Chiang Kai Shek College in Tondo, Manila.

According to Alan Taule of the Science Technology and Information Institute, "The AMC aims to highlight the importance of mathematics as a curriculum subject, give students an opportunity to discover talent in mathematics, and provide resources for the classroom and general discussion. Unlike formal examinations in mathematics, many of the problems are set in situations to which students can relate easily, indicating the relevance of mathematics in their everyday lives.

"Moreover, the AMC offers an opportunity for students to attempt (to solve) problems in common with students... (abroad). In recent years, as a result of the size of the competition, students and school authorities can reliably (set a) benchmark (of) their performance vis-à-vis their neighbors and obtain a good guide to the standard they have reached."

* * *

R. P. Villarico [rpvillarico@my.smart.com.ph] asks: "How does a radiometer work?"

Invented by Sir William Crookes in 1875 to measure the intensity of radiation, the (vane) radiometer is made up of four equally spaced vanes, silver on one side, black on the other, all of them attached to a vertical axis inside a glass container (with low-pressure gas).

How does it work? The principle is differences in light absorption (by different colors).

According to the Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia, "When a beam of sunlight is directed at the assembly, the vanes rotate about the axis. The effect is caused by the greater absorption of radiation by the blackened side of the vanes. Residual air molecules in the enclosure strike both the black and the silver sides equally, but they absorb more heat from the black sides and rebound with greater energy. The differential force causes the vanes to spin, the black faces moving away from the sunlight."

What is the importance of the radiometer? A more sophisticated version was done in 1946 by R. H. Dicke to measure radiation from the sun, moon, stars and even from the earth itself. This microwave radiometer acts like a radio receiver that detects "noise" energy radiated by a hot body.

A radiometer is a usual stuff at science fairs (at least in the US and Europe). For more detailed information on the workings of a radiometer (and specifications for building one), go to www.madsci.org or www.howstuffworks.com.

* * *

A generous reader, James [jcdvo@skyinet.net] shares some recycling information: "Here are two links that may interest you:

1) www.floridachemical.com/d-limonenestyrofoamrecycling. htm

2) www.sony.co.jp/en/Products/SC-HP/CXPAL/CXNEWS-9/ PDF/EYE.pdf.

"Extracts from orange peels can dissolve those pesky styrofoams! What is good about the solvent described here is that it is natural and therefore biodegradable. The question is: Where do we get all those orange peels?"

(Queena N. Lee-Chua, Ph.D., is an associate professor of mathematics and psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. She writes the column "Mind Games" for www.inq7.net every Wednesday. Contact her at blessbook@yahoo.com.)

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THAT Vision 'THING'

By Mike George

IN a famous study at Yale University, final-year students were asked a range of questions about life. Within the study were two landmark questions.

"Do you have goals?" was the first. Around 10 percent of the respondents said yes. The second question was: "If you have goals, do you have them written down?". This one only four percent answered in the affirmative.

For another study 20 years later, the university located the same students in a search that spanned the world. Some had died, but the vast majority of the original respondents was found, and asked to complete a follow-up questionnaire.

It turned out, when the indicators for success were applied, that the four percent who had written down their goals 20 years ago were streets ahead of the rest. They had achieved a more balanced life, and their commitment to the community was "outstandingly different."

And while financial worth was not intended to be one of the measures, it was found that the four percent were worth more than all the 96 percent together!

Perhaps the most interesting interpretation of this study is that, when globally translated, it appears that around 96 percent of us will spend our whole lives helping the four percent achieve their goals.

Future state

What is a goal but a vision, the inner image of a preferred future state?

That future could be seen in terms of external achievement—by acquisition of status, power or wealth.

Or, the preferred state could be inner achievement, the development of new skills, abilities, insights or behaviors. Or, depending on your personal values, it could be the letting go of external acquisitions and internal beliefs and concepts that are seen to impede or "imprison," the vision being one of freedom from any attachment.

In all cases, the principles in the process of vision achievement apply to the extent that the vision is clear in focus, rich in detail and concentrated in time. The achievement will then happen with ease; otherwise, there would be struggle.

Visions or mental pictures are subject to the law of attraction. They are magnetic, drawing towards themselves energies and circumstances that will make them realized as outer conditions or crystallized as experience and an inner state of being.

But real vision is not desire. Where there is desire, there is an attachment to a result, and the fear implicit within the desire will dilute the clarity of vision and weaken action along the way.

Doing and being

"Without vision, the people perish," says the New Testament. Why? Vision gives direction and meaning to life. A coherent vision is like an inner filter.

In the context of "doing," it could be explained, thus:

Let's say your vision is a picture of you winning a major tennis tournament in three years. If tomorrow while walking down the high street, you see a sign that says, "Tennis Sale: Equipment and Lessons Half-Price," then because you have the mental picture inside your head, the sign has meaning.

No vision equals no meaning—which is why many people wake up most days and ask: "What's the meaning of this life?"

In the context of "being," the same principle applies at an internal level when you create the vision of your character, say, in a year's time. If it is one of patience, peacefulness and personal power, then you will be alert to moments, situations and resources that may provide you with the wisdom to create the necessary changes in your character and the opportunities to practice.

Without a sense of personal vision, life can easily become direction-less and meaning-less. As a consequence, motivation, commitment and self-esteem deteriorate.

An effective vision is a composite of elements that are usually caught, more than taught. Vision formation is internal, and it requires a sifting, a recognition, an ability to give priority and a synthesis of elements—some of which may be barely visible.

Any focus or pattern emerges from a kaleidoscope of human influences, experiences, reflections and intuitions.

Clarity of vision results from pattern recognition and selection, which is a process that requires both rational and emotional cues. Vision creation is a balanced process of allowing the elements to come together, and then naturally (seeing or insight) and deliberately refining the

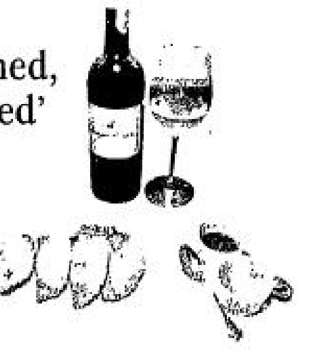
THAT 'VISION'/C2

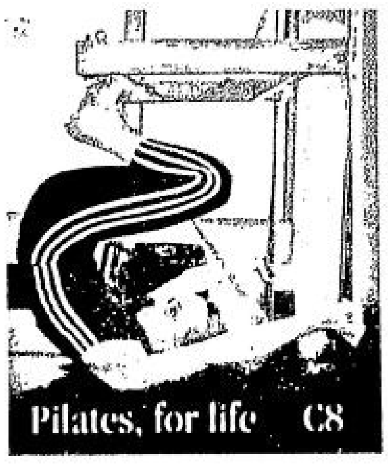
No vision equals no meaning—which is why many people ask, 'What is the meaning of life?'

WHAT'S INSIDE

Living in tropical-plantation style C6

'Dined, wined' C7





Pilates, for life C8

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If you don't have an HSBC card yet, apply now and get 5 raffle tickets upon submission of your application and any Toy Kingdom receipt.
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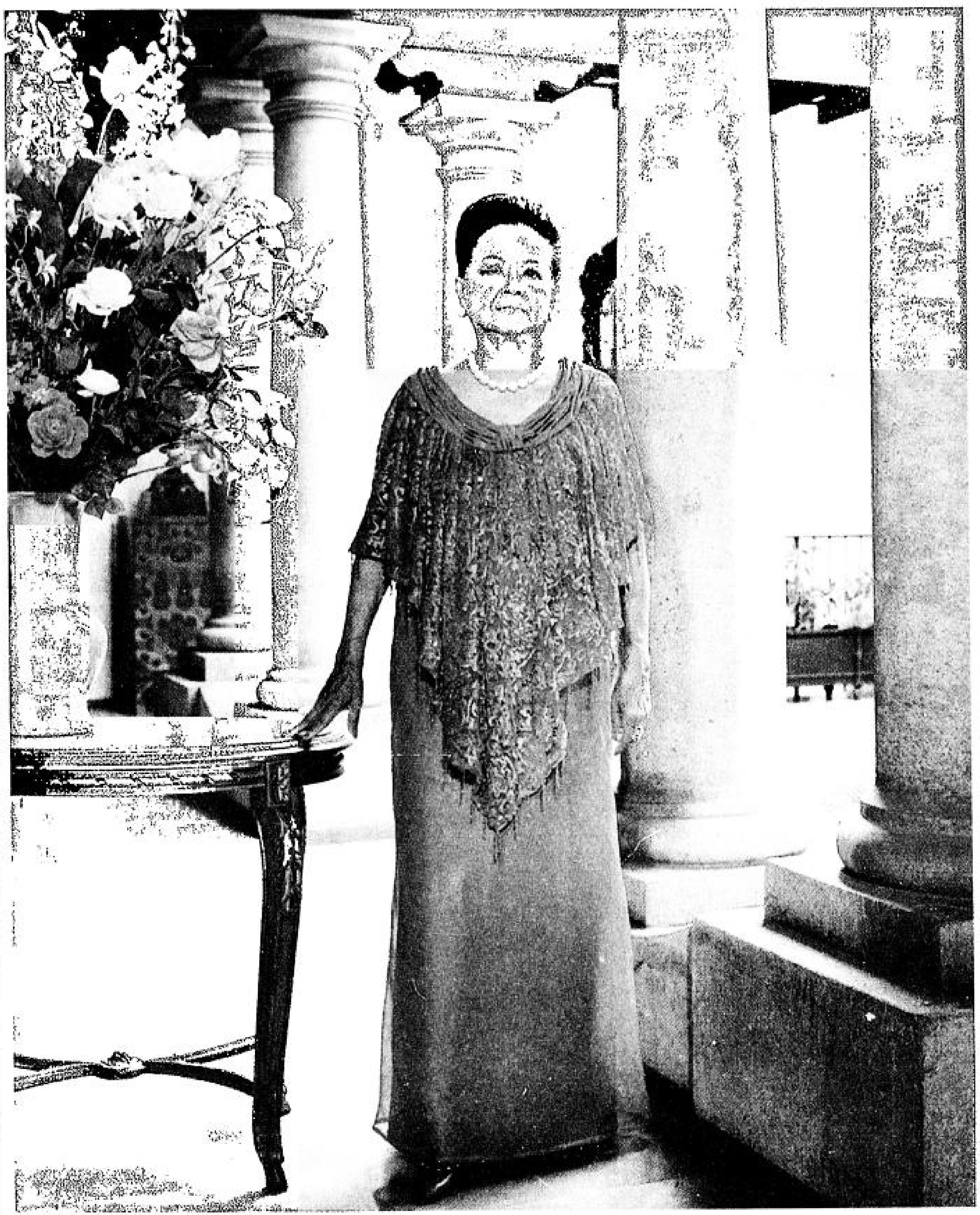
Golden Age

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Rupert Jacinto



IMPERIAL. Consuelo Madrigal-Collantes

OUR youth-obsessed or ageist culture has this crippling fear of growing old. It could be out of reluctance to face the inevitable reality of death, or an aversion for succumbing to degeneration.

East and West have almost entirely opposite ideas about aging. The Western concept is to retire from work and putter around until death. In the Orient, seniority is the period of wisdom and spiritual dynamism, when these folks are fully equipped to share with others the gains of their experiences.

The body will definitely lose attractiveness as it becomes old, but the person's acquired wisdom buffs his spirit to a resplendent shine.

Life is a journey of learning for those who set out on an inward road to growth. It is on this voyage that they develop the most sage aspect of their character as a source of peace and love. The growth and transformation undergone by an adolescent into adulthood pale in comparison with the change toward maturity.

We are inspired by mature people who never stop learning. Because they are motivated by a loving desire to touch the life of others, much of what they learn provides others with happiness.

They are admired for the way they conduct themselves from day to day. Their words and actions are perceived by those around them as the natural unfolding of their best qualities.

The 'perks'

"We're senior citizens but we enjoy our lives," declares socialite Mary Prieto. This doyenne of social graces has always been known to say the appropriate thing in every situation. At this stage in her life, she can bend the rules without losing the true essence of what she is.

"I can do anything I want. I can say anything I want. In my younger days, I was careful about what I said. I never wanted to offend people. I always observed courtesy. Not I'm too old to care—not that I go around hurting people. No. I just says what I want to say in my own way."

Civic and business leader Consuelo Madrigal-Collantes points out the perks. "We are treated with respect. I take advantage of the privileges. I don't have to stand up when people come. I'm more relaxed. I don't try to be what I'm not. I do what I want. If I want to do well, I do well in everything. The best thing is that when you wake up with no aches and pains, you appreciate your health more."

Grace is acquired after contending with life's myriad problems. There surely have been ups and downs, but these people merely gathered strength to put things right and go on their way.

"You know better, with all your experiences. You can easily forgive—unlike before, when the slightest mistake was enough to upset you. Now you're more solid, mellow, patient, understanding," says Madrigal-Collantes.

They realize that certain attachments and attractions of comfort zones are illusions.

"You've seen so many things in your life that nothing rattles you," says Prieto. "What you thought was important, no longer is. When you're younger, you tend to be selfish. You don't pay much attention to others. You had idiosyncrasies."

Now her grandchildren and a great-grandchild is a source of strength. "I look forward to their accomplishments," Prieto muses.

Madrigal-Collantes continues to be a builder of bonds.

"I come from a close-knit family, but the second, third and fourth generations are not as close anymore. During the anniversary of my mother and father, I told the younger ones, 'If it weren't for your *lolo*, you wouldn't have an apartment in New York or a helicopter. You wouldn't be able to buy a jeep.'"

As clan matriarch, her words are heeded. She hopes the younger generations would sustain the family business. Despite her desire to retire, the young ones have pleaded with her to remain at the helm.

ELEGANT. Mary Prieto

"There is a temptation to think I have everything I want," she says. "Actually, I need challenge. As long as I have my senses about, I'll do exactly as I have always done. I never stop."

> The body will definitely lose luster as it becomes old, but the person's acquired wisdom buffs his spirit to a resplendent shine

Zest and drive

Bienvenido Tantoco, chair of Rustan's Group of Companies, shares the same zest for life. When he enters the room, his energy bursts forth freely like a child's, not a man turning 82.

To him, life and work are a celebration of the self. A youthful eagerness manifests this celebration in everything he does.

"There's no difference between now and when I was 40," he says. "I still do the same work."

When he and his late wife Gliceria started Rustan's, he handled the administrative side, while she was the frontrunner. Today, he is more restless than ever, practically living in a suitcase, generating ideas and making them work, with projects all over the world.

"An advantage of being this age is that I know the suppliers very well on account of our long association. We respect each other, being in business together for the last 50 years," he says.

Purpose keeps these people ageless. Because they pursue their goals with honor and grace, others around them are touched by the cheer they exude, which makes the path brighter and more pleasant.

(Photographer Rupert Jacinto will launch his book "A Celebration of the Filipino: Portraits of an Era" early this year at the Peninsula Manila.)

DYNAMIC. Bienvenido Tantoco

That vision 'thing'

(From page C1)

details.

Attachment to the vision can be fatal in a rapidly changing world, so a continuous process of reviewing and refining is healthy.

Leadership

A vision can be a dream, a mission, a commitment, a forecast, a hunch, a precursor to a discovery, or a new approach to achieving a particular outcome. Those lacking in vision are thought to be doomed. Their destiny is not within their control. They are fated to be controlled by the more imaginative, in all walks of life.

Vision is the one quality that may be shared and valued by entrepreneurs, coaches, prophets, politicians, strategists, scientists and artists. It takes historical vision to know where we have been, situational vision to see where we are and strategic vision to work out the direction in which we should now be going.

Leadership vision is required to motivate people to change their ways, strive to attain higher standards, take greater risks, support new ways of doing things, and reach new goals.

It needs organizational vision to work out how people can best pool their resources and abilities so as to rise to a collective challenge. Visionary foresight enables leaders to identify important issues while there is still time to do something about them.

In a group context, the key visionary skill is systems vision, the ability to appreciate and comprehend the systems in which one is playing a part, and which in turn are affecting the part that one can play—determining, as if by an unseen hand, what one can and cannot do, and creating the potential for what is possible to do tomorrow.

Systems vision is the artistic vision of our era, the political vision of our age, and the dominant potential creative forces of the moment. Systems vision is a new art form waiting to be discovered, the international currency for leadership.

But systems visions are not created by solitary minds working without exposure to other stimuli. This is the responsibility of teams that go by many names—think tanks, task forces, strategic planners, long-range forecasters. Their purpose is the same: to anticipate, create and define futures for their groups or their nations.

Making it happen

To work, these groups should practice vision management, a previously unrecognized skill. In the very least, this embraces a situation where vision can create:

- A context permitting, encouraging and rewarding visionary thinking
- An aptitude for, experience at, or training in, vision creation
- An appreciation of systems thinking
- The creativity or imagination to envisage new futures
- The ability to synthesize and integrate disparate concepts
- An appropriate attitude and support for risk-taking
- An organizational ability to restructure, regroup and refocus resources
- A capacity among leaders to have the confidence to allow new people to own and develop the new vision
- The flexibility to adapt the vision as events and circumstances unfold.

In a turbulent world, visions can induce stability and restore a semblance of order. However, those with powerful and inspirational visions need to take care.

History shows us that a vision broadcast to ten or ten thousand can serve as a trigger to those who are threatened by vision-driven change, and their resistance can be fatal. John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi are the most famous examples.

Daily vision resistance can be encountered more commonly across lunch/dinner and boardroom tables. This is why it is often best to create it, sustain it and keep quiet about it. And just enjoy watching it become a reality.

(Mike George has written several books on well-being. "Discover Inner Peace" is available at Inner Space, 7484 Bagtikan Street San Antonio Village, Makati City)

Revitalize bonding moments this New Year

It is a brand new year. And it only means two things - out with the old, and in with the new. Out with the old bad habits and in with the totally new more mature me.

Crossing timelines always excite me, a lot of fresh ideas to look forward to - new clothes, new gadgets, new hangouts, or probably new hairstyles. One cool stuff is the New Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean for active hair, which makes me and my friends confident to try new trends and upcoming trails or adventures.

Oh, my friends. We had tons of memories for the past years. We fought, we made up, and we fought again, and learned more and more about each other. We went through the best times and the worst. But one thing's for sure, through heartaches and cramming, through every laughter, and tear, we were there; glued to each other, and we never left anybody without a shoulder to cry on.

I could already hear you singing "Through the Years" but that, pretty much, spells out our bonding. We were there, together, no matter what, however. And stepping into this New Year only gets us even more enthusiastic with whatever trials and triumphs we might have because surely it will make us more understanding and loyal towards each other. Now we can just laugh at our petty quarrels and boo-boos.

What we've learned in the past year is that the important thing about friendship--in taking a step towards a new journey--is to keep the wisdom gained in every fall and hopeful of the dreams ahead. Hand-in-hand we stride through every obstacle, keeping our laughter in our treasure of memories. One day we can show to the world bonding is not just about gimmicks and all out fun; rather, it is the unity of souls dwelling in different bodies. Sort of like a friendship - marriage, unbreakable.

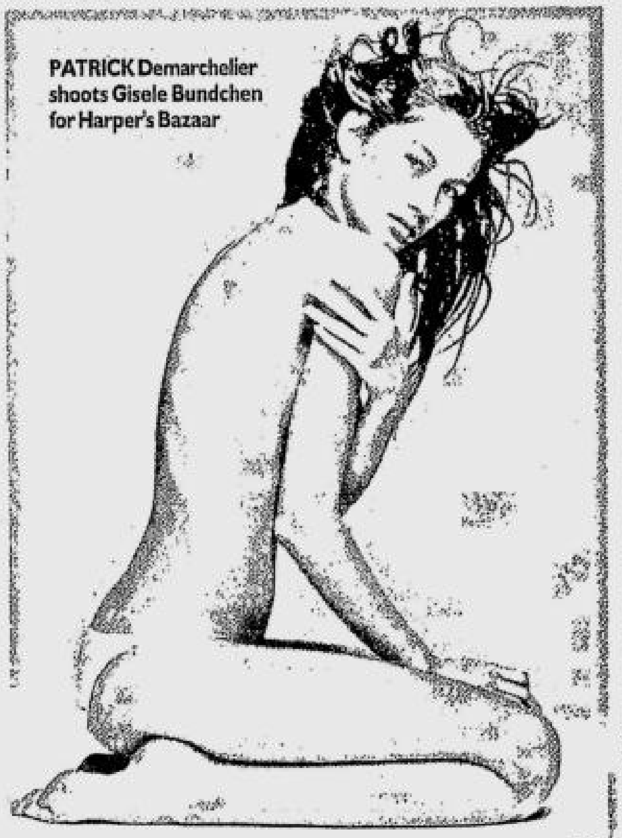
Indeed, it is the time to revitalize ourselves. Out with the old, and in with the new. Like the new Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean for active hair, which will surely keep our hair bonded through trying times. It's our official hair gadget. We literally just flip our smooth hair with whatever stress or heat! It is fun being young, we stay active and we live our lives the best we can.

I am sure there are still a lot of bigger things to come - times that will truly test our friendship. Priorities, choices, decisions, all of which might hurt or heal a friend. But we will continue to live as friends, and everyday with stronger bonds. Our friendship already placed a mark in our hearts, something we can't live without.

Talagang close 'pag walang lagkit.
SUNSILK
NUTRIENT SHAMPOO
WITH NUTRALIFE® COMPLEX PLUS FRUITAMINS
Revitalizing Clean for Active Hair
Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean for Active Hair

BOOK REVIEW

HERB Ritts captures Carre Otis, British Vogue



PATRICK Demarchelier shoots Gisele Bundchen for Harper's Bazaar

'Talking Fashion' both astute & humorous

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

Talking Fashion
By Sarajane Hoare
Powerhouse Books, NYC, 2002

WHEN one says "fashion editor," images of an ultra-glamorous woman in a Chanel suit and Manolo Blahnik mules in the front row during a Milan fashion show, with a tiny notebook and a Hermes Birkin bag, come to mind. Certainly a dream job for anyone even remotely interested in fashion!

Receiving the latest clothes from top designer, shmoozing with beautiful people in exotic places, deciding the latest trends, and being paid for it—what else is there?

British-born Sarajane Hoare demystifies the fashion editor's role in her book, "Talking Fashion."

A superb intellectual treatise that is likewise an animated discourse and a dazzling coffee table book, "Talking Fashion" takes readers behind the scenes of the fashion industry, as experiences by a fashion editor. It is written with both humor and astuteness, and illustrated with page after page of stunning images by today's most celebrated fashion photographers.

Hoare describes the planning involved for each photograph that makes it to print as akin to going through the tasks required of a contestant on "Survivor" or "The Amazing Race." For instance, the author relates that the cost of having Fishtail Mountain in Nepal as backdrop for a shoot involved seven hours of hiking with a dozen *sherpas* and *gurkhas*. And at one point, she recalls, she went via hovercraft from Dover to Calais in France just to avoid going through customs with three stuffed falcons.

Searching for the right looks from the runways of Paris and New York, or conducting a shoot on an active Hawaiian volcano (during which she lost thousands of dollars worth of clothes and jewelry), Hoare has entertaining anecdotes to tell and perceptive observations to share, which often expose the unglamorous side of the fashion industry.

Having to deal with countless celebrities, she once commited a major faux pas: she mistook Janet Jackson's boyfriend for a hotel porter.

Truly, this first book illustrates, there is more to being a fashion editor than sitting at a desk picking outfits. Hoare says, "You have to be a mother, shrink, magician, diplomat and gentle guide."

Not only does a fashion editor have to deal with the egos of models, photographers and make-up artists; she is also the creative force behind each photograph and layout.

Currently a contributing fashion editor for Vanity Fair, the author was the fashion director for British Vogue before joining Harper's Bazaar as fashion editor-at-large.

The sleek graphic design of "Talking Fashion" is the work of Fabien Baron, who redefined the look of Harper's Bazaar in 1992. He also designed Madonna's infamous art book, "Sex."

An enlightening and enjoyable read for aspiring *fashionistas*, photographers, magazine addicts and fashion editors-to-be, "Talking Fashion" showcases the works of the industry's finest photographers—Patrick Demarchelier, Mario Testino, Steven Klein, Peter Lindbergh, Steven Meisel, and Herb Ritts.

Avon survives the bumpy ride

- Photos by Bobot Meru
Pictorial direction by Antonio Salac Santos

...with strategic planning, manpower development, hard work and an eye on social responsibility

BUSINESS has been "bumpy" lately, as companies face new realities, not the least of which are globalization and shrinking markets. The bigger dilemma is the ever-increasing uncertainty of the future, incited by world events.

But in times such as these, business people are usually optimistic, seeing opportunities to adapt and change, and the kind of tension needed for growth.

Avon (Philippines) general manager Ma. Lourdes Dy Buncio says a company simply needs to be flexible, creative and resilient. She must know whereof she speaks. Despite a sluggish economy, Avon's performance has been satisfactory.

Year-to-date forecasts show that sales in 2002 surpassed the company's P1-billion target. Dy Buncio attributes the feat to strategic planning, manpower development, long hours of hard work, and an eye on social responsibility.

According to research, consumers are trying out more brands. In the past, they patronized a product or a brand for years and years. With the lowering of tariff rates on imported items—and therefore a wider range of merchandise—consumers are now having a field day. There is much less brand loyalty, on account of more experimentations with cheaper, unbranded cosmetics.

Avon, which traditionally targets the mid-range target, is up against cheap makeup from China. Take the P99 Avon Color Lipstick (P5 of this goes to the Philippine General Hospital's breast cancer clinic): although it is of higher quality than the P20 competitor, hard-nosed consumers would most likely trade off quality for price.

Another phenomenon, Dy Buncio cites, is the ever-increasing number of malls in the suburbs and in the provinces. More stores definitely means more product variety. "We have had to work harder to defend our leadership. We have to become responsive to the market," she says.

Any company worth its salt has to constantly improve quality of products, services, administrative processes and technical expertise, and invest in motivational training. With the stiff competition, Avon has to make itself more accessible to the market, provide good service through its dealers and make sure the stocks are adequate in all 110 outlets.

Another one of its thrusts is to educate consumers on ingredients and technology. "We have to sell benefits and quality. Consumers should know we are worth their money," Dy Buncio says. "These products have added value aside from providing color."

Personally, she swears by Nutra Lush. She relates that during the cough-and-cold season, her lips would invariably dry up. But with this product, she says, her lips stay moisturized.

In the cosmetics category, Trend Line, catering to the youth market, is the top seller. Price range is pocket-friendly and the colors are more fashion-forward. "Your mouth won't get a dark stain when you remove the lipstick," Dy Buncio promises.

This month Trend Line gets a facelift with brighter packaging.

Avon Color, which consists of basic shades, is endorsed by Lea Salonga. This partnership began when Avon sponsored the makeup for Repertory Philippines' stage productions. Salonga's "Let's Talk Avon" campaign has certainly boosted sales.

In Avon's repertoire, the lingerie, particularly the bra, is also a big money earner. Its P199 bra, made from imported materials, spars with a made-in-China bra and panty set, which goes for half the price.

"It's a tough fight," says Dy Buncio. Undoubtedly, production cost makes the locally made merchandise more costly than the cheap import. But a manufacturing facility in Calamba has been contributing to the economy by providing jobs.

In fragrance, consumers are downshifting from perfumes to splash-ons or colognes. Avon slugs it out through sales and marketing savvy.

More important, as Avon marks its 25th year in the country, the company continues to find ways to reach its true effectiveness, trying to achieve the right mix of profit, productivity and staff development.

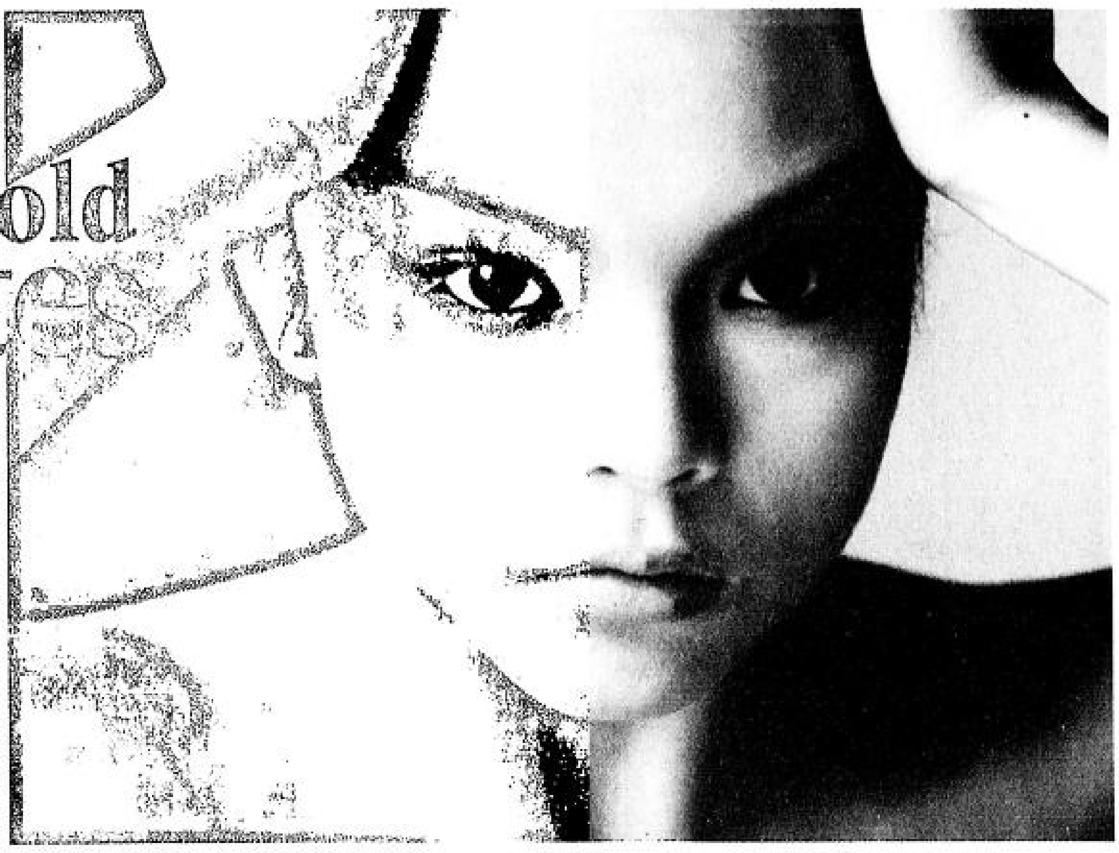
Companies with strong values and clear core missions, those that encourage workers to form shared visions based on that mission and those values, are the ones that would cope with dynamic changes.

Marge C. Enriquez

MODEL: **VERNS BUCKLEY**, CAL CARRIE'S
HAIR AND MAKEUP: **ANGELO JUSTIN**
FOR FRANCK PROVOST
CLOTHES: **VIKTOR & ROLF, HUSSEIN**
CHALAYAN, COSTUME NATIONAL
FROM HOMME ET FEMME, SHANGRI-LA MALL
JEWELRY: **BVLGARI**, 6750 AYALA
HOME ACCESSORIES: **FIRMA**, GREENBELT 3

New spin on old favorites

Classic looks are resurrected with new cosmetic formulas and application techniques



EVENING. The '80s look is back but the matte foundation is translucent. Rosas applies four shades of metallic brown shadow by Hard Candy and lines the inside of the eye rims as well as the outer lids. MODEL: ORANGE ABERIN, ELAN AGENCY HAIR: MARLON SUAREZ

DAYTIME. Go for sherbet colors. For the hologram look, Rosas uses three shades for the eyes using Shu Uemura's Pastel Fluos collection of Mint White for highlighter, Iced Lime and Sugared Pink.

Photos by Patrick Uy

EVERYTHING old becomes new again, as the song goes.

This year, makeup expert Patrick Rosas points out that three classic trends are getting a new spin, thanks to the ever-increasing sophistication of cosmetic formulas and application techniques.

- Matte foundation is making a comeback after seasons of the moist, dewy look. However, instead of the "mask" look of the past, it is more translucent.
- The three-dimensional look has been "incorporated" in the makeup formulas. Previously, you needed a base color, a contour color and a highlighter to define certain features. Lipsticks, eye and cheek colors now contain special pigments and light diffusers to create depth. If you're daring, you can even use stronger colors and create a hologram pattern.
- The smoky eyes and rimmed lash lines of the '80s are back, but done with a softer hand this time, and with metallic colors.

Rosas' personal forecast is the hologram look—using three or four shades on the eyes, for a finish that appears "diverged."

For daytime, Rosas recommends cosmetics that eliminate the need for a highlighter or add-on gloss. For this shoot he uses She Uemura's spring-summer 2003 collection.

The base is Velvet Perfect Foundation, a two-way cake foundation that has light-adjusting pigments. The lighter the skin tone, the more matte it becomes under the light. When worn on dark skin, it becomes sheer.

After the matte base, the face is colored with Pastel Fluos, a collection of multi-tasking pots (can be used for eyes, cheeks and lips) in Iced Lime, Mint White, Sugared Pink, Loly Red and Orange Bubble.

The eyes are then emphasized with the new Drawing Mascara, which separates and coats each lash so that they look as if an artist drew them. It goes with the Lash Primer that repairs and nourishes them.

Rogue 4 finishes the look. The collection is formulated to accomplish the four functions of lipstick—moisturize, intensify color, add brilliance, and play with texture.

For evenings, Rosas says smoky eyes still lend drama. Instead of black or gray eye shadow, he uses four shades of brown on the lid, blending carefully. He lines the lashes' inner rim and applies dark brown shadow on the lower lids. Then he balances the dark eye colors with clear lip gloss.

Tan-Gan's take on romance

HALTER-TOP with ruffled tulle and kits over a ruffled skirt

V-NECK dolman bamboo stitched blouse over a pleated, trapezoid-tail skirt

Photos by Wahoo Guerrero

DESIGNER Lulu Tan-Gan infuses the current romantic look with old and new elements.

In her new collection she innovates her patterns by introducing back funnels, trapezoids and hexagons as skirt tails, to complement drop-waist blouses.

Inspired by the Japanese *origami* art, skirts reveal interesting cuts and folds, for unusual dimension. From previous collections, Tan-Gan retains blousy tops, metallic threads and crimped knits.

Her big hit is the blouson top with convertible sleeves that double as scarves. Tie the sleeve around the neck and the top assumes an asymmetric edge.

Tan-Gan understands the working woman's busy schedule, so she gives her clothes that can take her from the workplace to the parties.

The favored yarn comes in apricot, kiwi, melon, bronze matte gold and copper.

"I wanted a light palette for this season," Tan-Gan says. "They impart subtle elegance not crass and flash."

MAKEUP: FRANCES ZULUETA
FOR SHU UEMURA
MODEL: CLAIRE HUNRADE,
CAL CARRIE'S INT'L
HAIR: ROCKY GIMENEZ
FOR COCOY SALON
LOCATION MORITA'S RESTAURANT
SPECIAL THANKS TO ELENA ROCES

Shu Uemura-ism explained

By Marie Calica
Contributor

JUST a few years ago, only people who traveled abroad or habitually read foreign glossy magazines were familiar with the name and work of Japanese beauty mogul Shu Uemura.

Up until the brand came to Manila, the only way Shu Uemura makeup users could get a hold of the products was by shopping in Hong Kong, Thailand or Singapore. When L'Oreal Philippines opened its first Shu Uemura boutique in Rustan's Makati, devotees heaved a sigh or relief, and converts went wild.

"Shu Uemura has been the top seller since the boutique opened in October," says brand manager Cristina Tinio, spends much of her workday on the shop floor where she meets makeup artists, working women, even students, who swear by the Japanese line.

In fact, that it is "Made in Japan" probably explains the confidence—Asian brands know Asian skin.

Makeup should be skincare at the same time. And then you can experiment with color. Says the master: 'Don't be afraid'

Discriminating makeup users and professional makeup artists don't complain about the price because they know they're paying for research, science and quality. But to totally appreciate Shu Uemura, one has to understand the "Shu Philosophy."

This artistic 74-year-old makeup visionary believes "beautiful makeup starts with beautiful skin." That's why his makeup invariably contains "skincare qualities." According to him, makeup should actually be skincare.

To illustrate, Deepsea Water is found in all Shu Uemura products. Deepsea water, known as the purest form of water, is taken from 300 meters below the sea level. It has no salt, and prepares skin to absorb makeup.

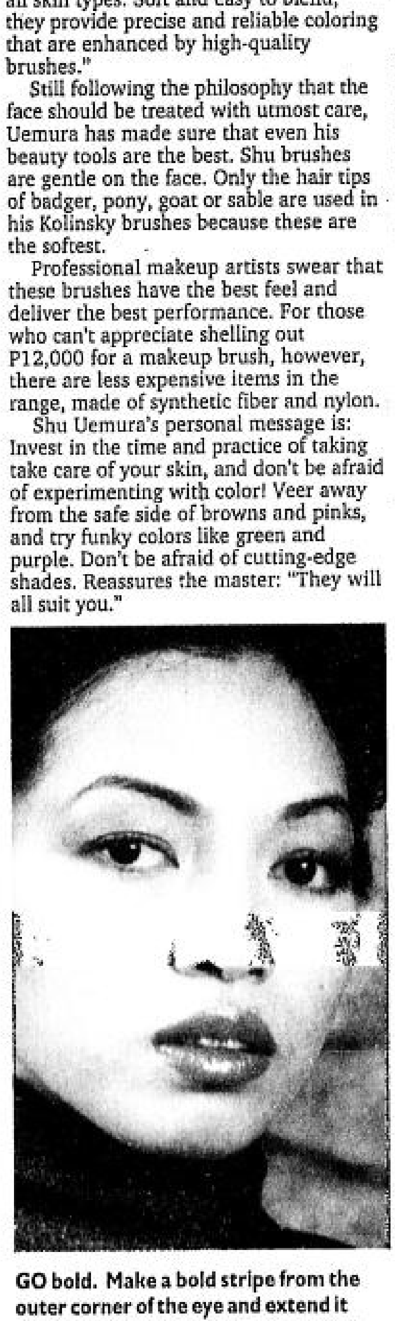
Variety is another reason why Shu is at the top of makeup users' list of favorites. The brand carries 10 shades of foundation—where other beauty counters carry three or four. There are 100 shades of eye shadow, 50 shades of Glow On (cheek blush) and 100 shades of lip rouge—definitely eye candy on the counter.

Why there are so many, Tinio says, is simple. "There are as many colors as there are women. Based on skin care-like formula, our makeup products snugly fit all skin types. Soft and easy to blend, they provide precise and reliable coloring that are enhanced by high-quality brushes."

Still following the philosophy that the face should be treated with utmost care, Uemura has made sure that even his beauty tools are the best. Shu brushes are gentle on the face. Only the hair tips of badger, pony, goat or sable are used in his Kolinsky brushes because these are the softest.

Professional makeup artists swear that these brushes have the best feel and deliver the best performance. For those who can't appreciate shelling out P12,000 for a makeup brush, however, there are less expensive items in the range, made of synthetic fiber and nylon.

Shu Uemura's personal message is: Invest in the time and practice of taking take care of your skin, and don't be afraid of experimenting with color! Veer away from the safe side of browns and pinks, and try funky colors like green and purple. Don't be afraid of cutting-edge shades. Reassures the master: "They will all suit you."



GO bold. Make a bold stripe from the outer corner of the eye and extend it towards the eyebrows. Blend for a soft look. Punctuate with strong lip gloss.

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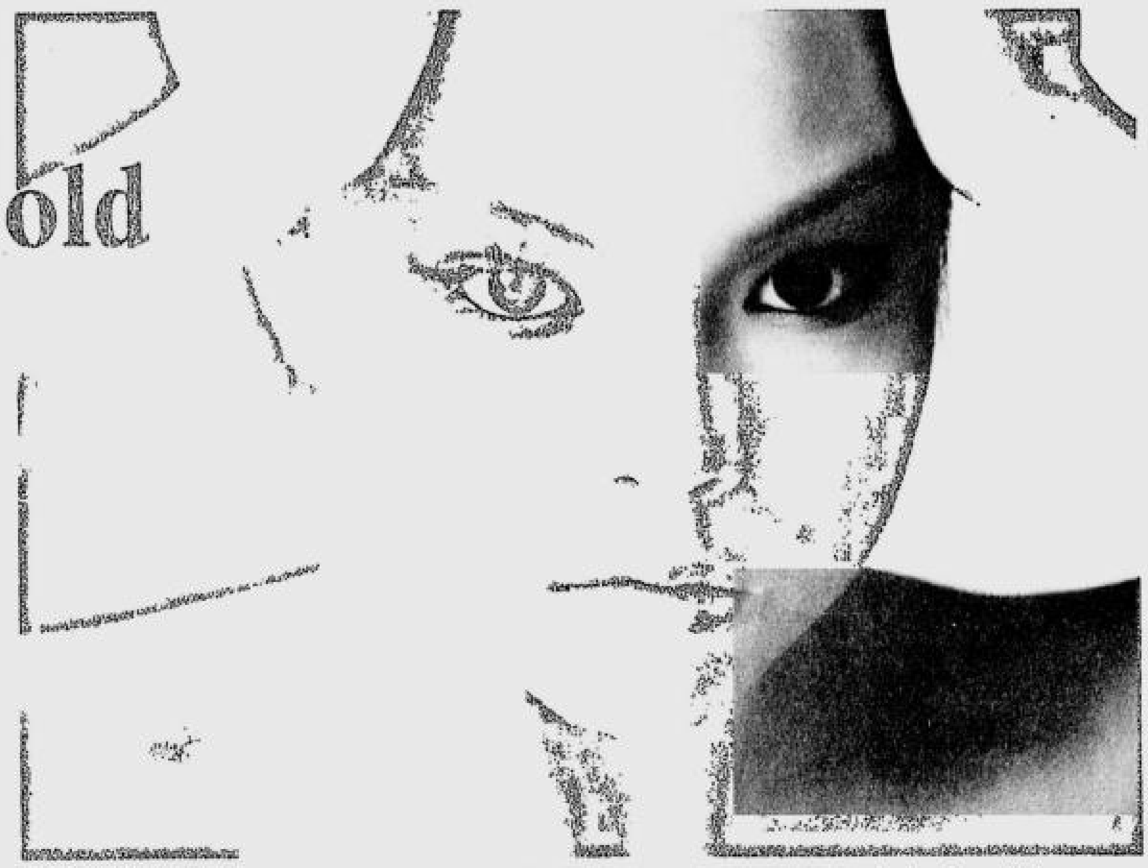
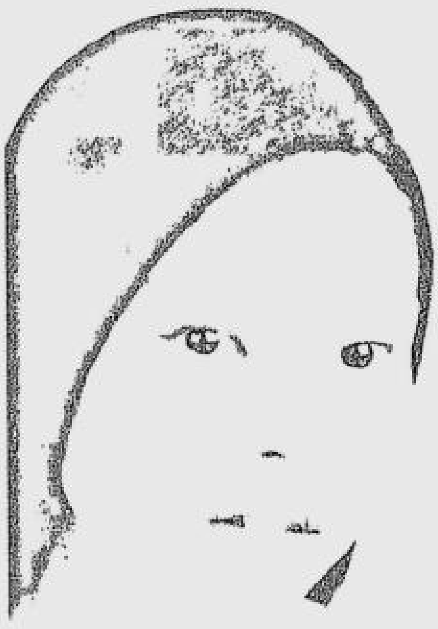
pin on old

Classic looks are resurrected with new cosmetic formulas and application techniques



EVENING. The '80s look is back but the matte foundation is translucent. Rosas applies four shades of metallic brown shadow by Hard Candy and lines the inside of the eye rims as well as the outer lids.

MODEL: ORANGE ABERIN ELAI. AGEN...
HAIR: MARLON SUAREZ



DAYTIME. Go for sherbet colors. For the hologram look, Rosas uses three shades for the eyes using Shu Uemura's Pastel Fluos collection of Mint White for highlighter, Iced Lime and Sugared Pink.

Photos by Patrick Uy

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HALTER-TOP with ruffled tulle and kits over a ruffled skirt

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FRANCES ZULUETA
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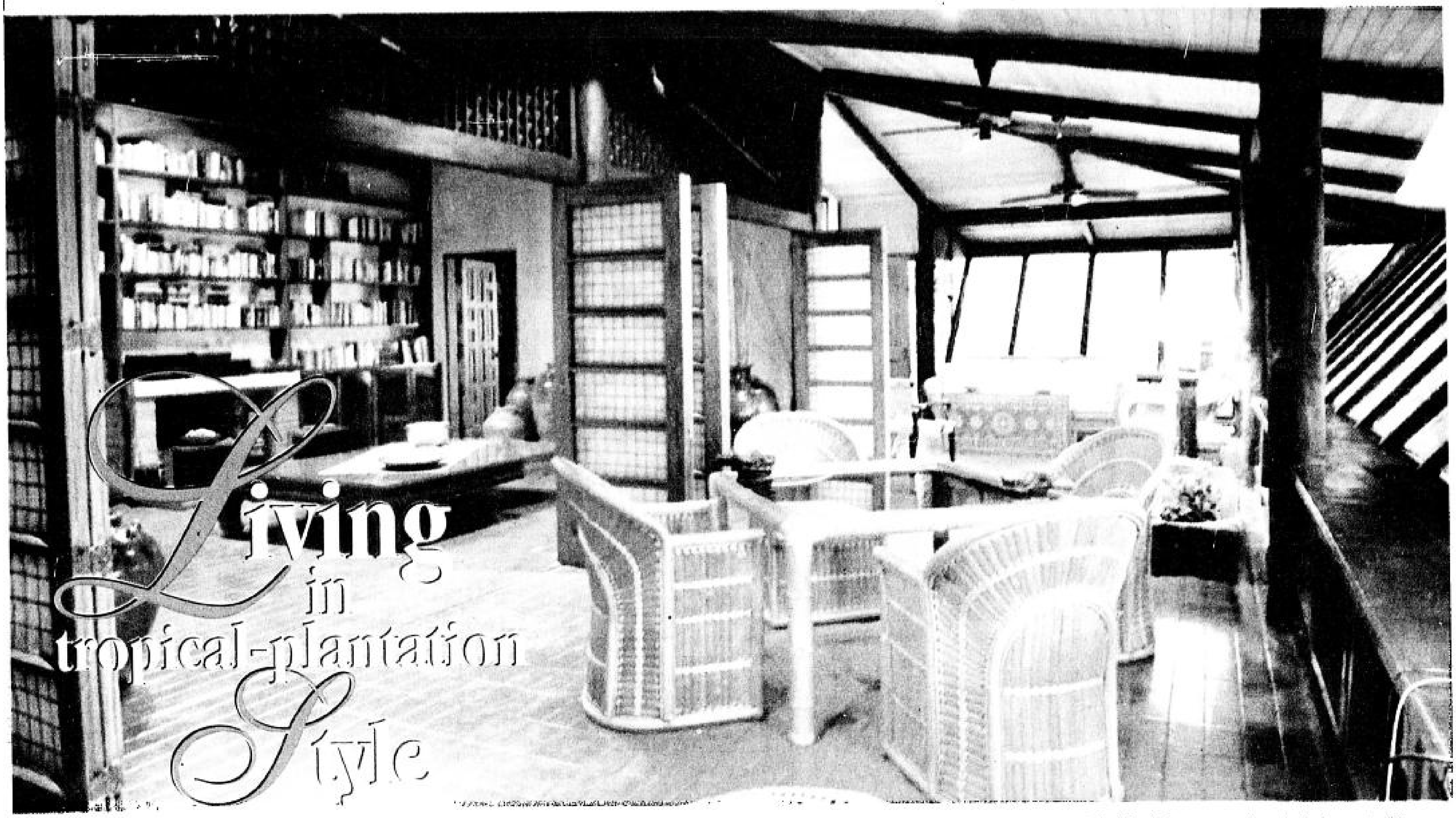
Living in tropical-plantation Style



HACIENDA LIVING. As in the plantation homes of old, we see the same way the living quarters are arranged—in a central area surrounded by a wraparound verandah with window seats and rustic timber posts. There are Spanish colonial elements such as the capiz sliding doors with narra frames and wood transom. The verandah is furnished with Budji Layug's early pieces.

By Adrian V. Lizares
Contributor
Photos by Chito Vecina
Pictorial Direction by Albert Avellana

IT is said that architecture is dictated by influences related to geography and culture—thus the log cab-ins in the highlands of the United States, or the stilted wooden huts along the Agusan River marshland. Weather is another major factor in shaping residential buildings.

All around Negros Island, many plantation homes exist to this day. During the first half of the 20th century, the Philippine government granted rights to build and operate sugar mills to a dozen or so families living on both (Occidental and Oriental) sides of the island. These ushered in the extensive use of US technology, since most of the mills were patterned after those already in existence in Hawaii and other sugar-producing American states.

The resulting architecture for the residences found dotting the periphery of the sugar "centrals" (as they are commonly referred to) is not a direct result of the Antillan style. Rather, it is a new breed of architecture and design that is basically American in spirit, as they were very much involved with the sugar industry during its incipience.

These homes were built during the 1920s and '30s, and were used mostly as residential buildings for the management and staff of the sugar mills. Many other private homes were built in the same style, but are nestled in the midst of vast tracks of land devoted to one plant—the sugarcane.

Most of these structures are simple and linear. Typically, the main floor is elevated from the ground, keeping it well above the water during the rainy season. This also allows ventilation from underneath. Living quarters and other rooms are located in the center, completely surrounded by wide verandahs. Extensive awnings shield the residents from heat and rain. In some cases, the kitchen is a separate structure connected to the rest of the house by a railed causeway. Even if the kitchen catches fire, the main building will remain safe.

The joy of adapting

One American family that continues to live on the island has taken very much to the system, infusing its own style into this particular Philippine architecture. They settled in the sugar and molasses trade post-World War II, which meant they had to set up base both in Negros and in Manila. As they needed to provide housing, too, for the company's directors and owners, they realized they had to build—and build they did, drawing heavily on the American influence.

Travelling to Bali in the early 1950s, the family stayed in a similar plantation home there. Coming back, they decided to build the home we now feature here in "Asian tropical style"—long before it became a catchphrase. In 1964, they commissioned a Filipino architect to work on the project and sent him to Bali to see a compatriot-friend's home, which they had admired very much.

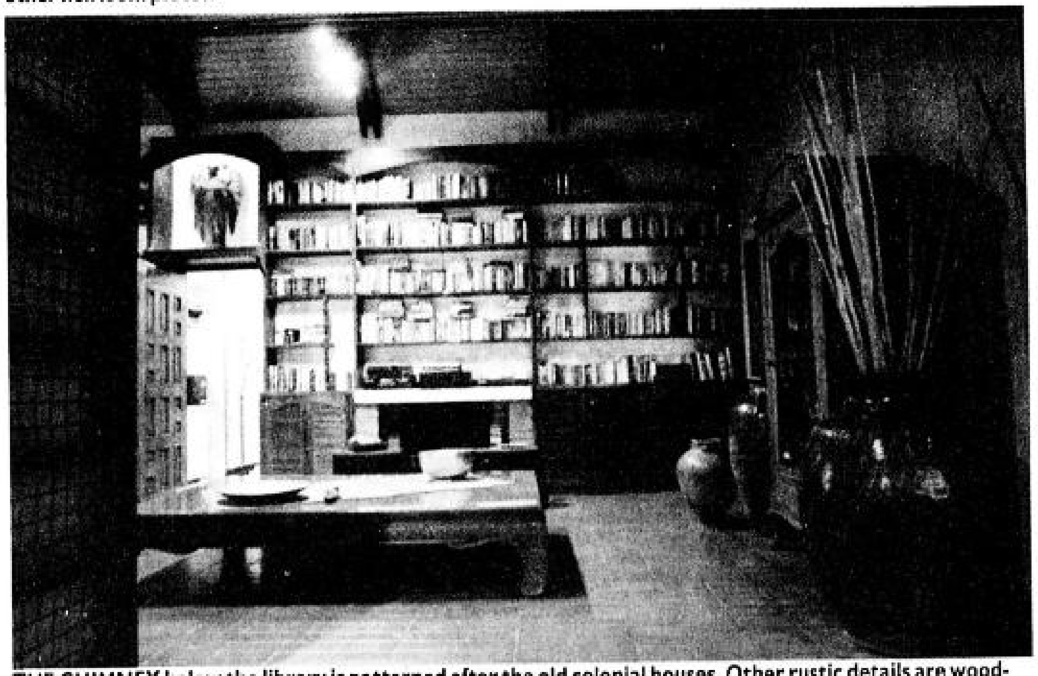
Second-generation members of the family, who now live in this bungalow, have also lent much of their own style into the original architecture. Here, as in the plantation homes of old, we see the same way the living quarters are arranged—in a central area surrounded by a wraparound verandah.

> Second-generation members of the family, who now live in this bungalow, have lent much of their own style into the original architecture

THE MOORISH-INSPIRED door opens to the verandah. Large overhangs protect the verandah from the sun and rain. Railings with ventanillas below provide airflow. This space is decorated with Oriental chimes and other heirloom pieces.

Heirloom pieces

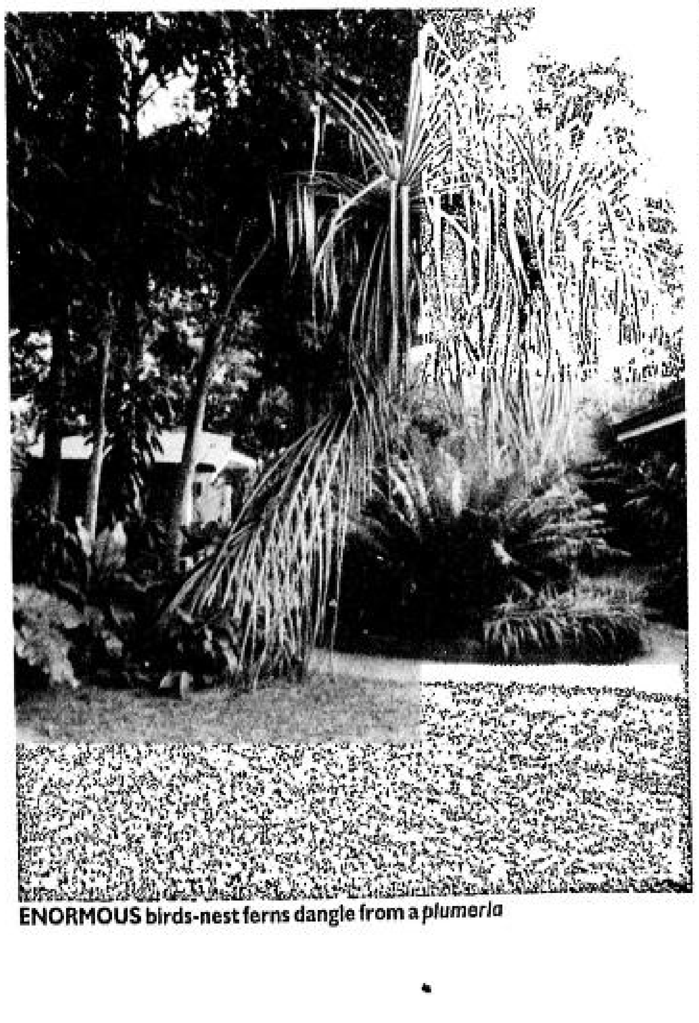
Instead of solid or hard-core walls, the living areas are easily accessed through *capiz* shell panels that fold into neat and decorative elements. Most partitioning walls are made using pierced woodwork, also found on the top portions of these partitions, for air-conditioning at its most natural best. The verandah is totally screened in, from the hardwood ledges that line three sides of the structure (erstwhile used to display various treasures the old couple had amassed) up to the eaves of the roof, leaving the mosquitoes at bay while allowing the air to circulate from all sides of the house.



THE CHIMNEY below the library is patterned after the old colonial houses. Other rustic details are wood-paneled walls, a transom that becomes a shrine for the icon and cabinets with narra louvers. The floor is actually patterned cement with red wash. This corner is furnished with the owner's antique collection of Thai bed, which is made into a coffee table and Sung Dynasty jars.

Most of the heirloom furniture are housed in storage and used sparingly.

There are Filipino *bas relief* carvings of religious motifs, *santos*, swords and sabers from the Muslim south, antique furniture from Bulacan and Batangas, and old books—all collectors' items. An ample-sized mural by Pacita Abad (c. 1983) adorns one whole wall, while works by renowned artists the likes of BenCab, Felix R. Hidalgo, and Manuel Rodriguez, Sr. grace the other walls, casually. Oriental artwork from woodblock prints to silk panels and fine porcelain are strewn about, more in the manner of function, rather than that of ornamentation.



ENORMOUS birds-nest ferns dangle from a *plumeria*

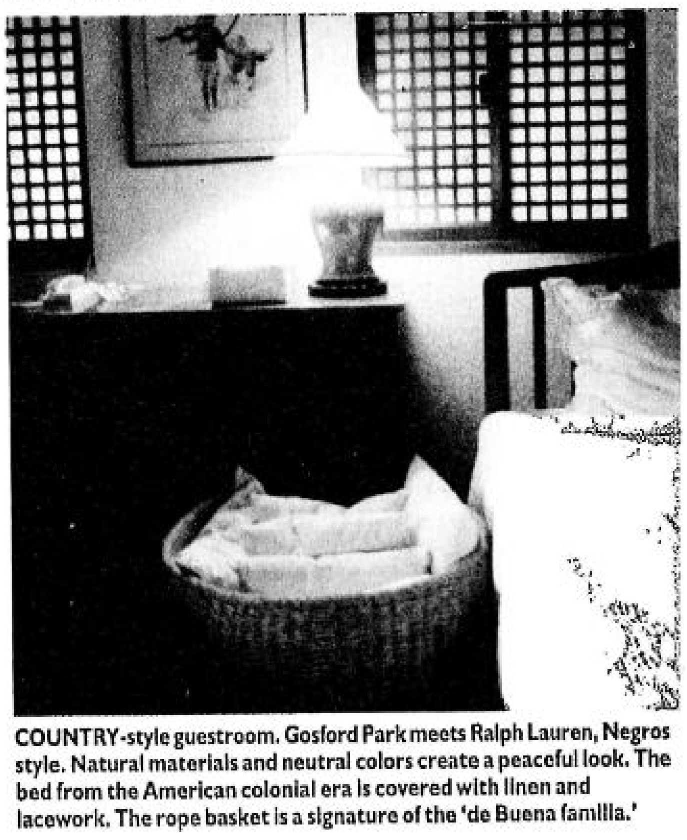
Linens

In an exceptionally refined, yet relaxed, atmosphere, I discover in this home the amazing world of linen.

There are huge tablecloths completely covered in hand-embroidered *heleconias*, birds, and other exotic designs in colors that will make it to Town & Country anytime. There are damasks and fine Irish linens, cotton *batiste* place settings finely worked into doilies and mats, all bearing the embroidered initials of their creator—trappings of style that required a live-in *bordadera*.

Obviously, the owners had entertained extensively.

Like the architecture, the garden that surrounds the house has apparently gone through so much evolution. Normally, a garden as old would reflect the onslaughts of both droughts and typhoons, or the ignorance and neglect of the householders. This is not the case here. Two enormous birds-nest ferns dangle from a *plumeria* the same age as the house. These had been airlifted from Pasay City, saving it from urban abandon. With time on my side, I take an ethereal moment to sit and watch these plants in the moonlight, contemplating life over whiskey and water.



COUNTRY-style guestroom. Gosford Park meets Ralph Lauren, Negros style. Natural materials and neutral colors create a peaceful look. The bed from the American colonial era is covered with linen and lacework. The rope basket is a signature of the 'de Buena familia.'

'Dined, wined'

By Amando Doronila

THE LAST Christmas and New Year holidays were occasions for unveiling special menus, as they had traditionally been, but some restaurants went beyond that—they introduced specials inspired by a selection of wines to match.

This is what happened at Magnum, Greenbelt 2. After settling down to a location better known for drinks and food, it introduced a new menu based on "holiday chef specials," a change that comes just once in every quarter. But the change was made not just for the sake of change. Change is nothing if it does not produce anything exciting.

Value for money

The new menu was created to provide harmony with new wine arrivals from France, Italy, California and Chile.

Chef Vladimir Lutelia, who at one time was with Oriental Mandarin Manila, spearheaded the change. It is not enough to recall the new dishes savored during a recent meal. They have to be considered in tandem with the wines that went with them.

The appetizer was shrimp and cream cheese empanadas served with mango chutney and Jalapeño Chimichuri. This went with a white from Bordeaux—the Berger Baron Blanc, vintage 2002, from the Baron Philippe de Rothschild estate. Of course 2000 is considered a good year for Bordeaux wines, both red and white, but Berger Baron Blanc, specifically, is a well-balanced dry white with an accent of ripe fruit, glowing with a fine straw color and exuding a fragrant bouquet. The wine was a blend of *sauvignon blanc*, *semillion* and *muscadelle* grapes. It had none of the strong fruitiness of *chardonnay*, the most widely used grape variety for whites. There could not have been a more compatible combination between the appetizer and the wine.

The wine fetches P370 per bottle—good value for money.

Main courses

There were three choices for main dish. First was grilled Pacific prawns on a bed of creamy leeks with marble potatoes, grilled vegetables and hollandaise sauce. The prawns were fresh and grilled just right—i.e. before the flesh got tough. The dish was matched with a 1999 Woodbridge Merlot from California. Merlot is the main grape variety from which the highly priced Chateau Petrus is made. The Woodbridge Merlot is described as having "enticing notes of ripe plums and berries (weaving through) the aromas of the wine. It was aged in small oak barrels, which coaxed out "nuances of spices and toasty vanilla." According to the brochure, "the velvety style is a perfect accompaniment to most meals, especially lamb, beef, pork and poultry." It also blended well with the prawns.

Second choice was *osso buco* (braised veal shank) with Carmenere red wine sauce, mushroom, risotto and grilled vegetables. The serving was modest in size, which was in good taste. The red wine was something special. The 2001 Sunrise Carmenere comes from the well-known Chilean winemakers Concha y Toro. This wine is made of a rare and nearly extinct grape variety—Carmenere.

The grape came from Bordeaux but was wiped out by the plant pest, xyphyloxera, which attacks the roots of the vine. The variety exported to Chile survived—thanks to the impenetrable Andes mountains and the climate that provided immunity from the pest.

It is grown in the Pirque Vineyard at Maipo Valley, Chile. The wine has an intense ruby-red color, and its flavor has a strong hint of spices (black pepper) and blackberry. It is described as a wine with "good body, soft, harmonious, of great balance and persistence in the mouth."

Baby lamb and 'reserva'

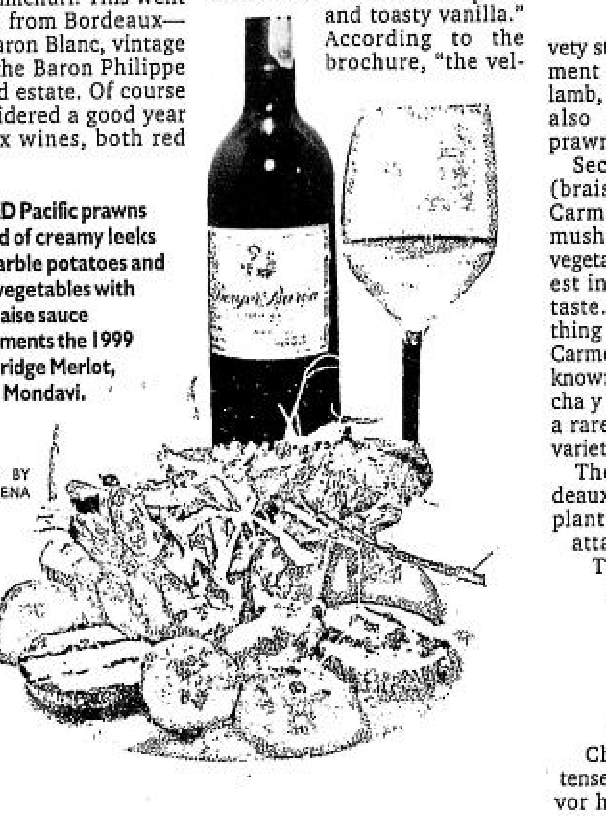
Third choice for main course was penne pasta tossed in *aligue*, crabmeat and pine nuts with grilled chorizo. This dish has both a Latin American accent and a local ingredient and flavor. This was paired off with the 1999 Cabernet Roncaccio from the Eugenio Collavani vineyards in northern Italy. This wine is made of cabernet sauvignon grapes. It is a full-bodied wine, with herbaceous flavor. It also has an intense ruby-red color with violet overtones. This wine is suited to long aging, which enhances its complexity. Cabernet sauvignon, when blended with Cabernet Franc, is reputed to bring "refinement to the rude aristocracy of the Franc."

Magnum is carrying its holiday chef specials over to the next few months. Possibly up for inclusion is the Brazilian chorizo, which will be grilled and sliced right in front of the diners. This presentation is replicated from the "*asadores*" in Madrid, restaurants specializing in grills. In one of these where I had dinner with friends, the main dish was grilled baby lamb. Before it was served, the restaurant staff put a small "*parilla*" on the table where small slices of lamb chops were grilled as appetizers. These we washed down with Rioja "*reserva*" red wine.

Magnum in Greenbelt 2 presents a new menu created to provide harmony with new wine arrivals from France, Italy, California and Chile

WINE tasting is a sensual experience. This photo is interpreted by Jun de Leon who drizzled Robert Mondavi's cabernet sauvignon over the model.

MODEL: MARJORIE MARISTELA, CAL CARRIE'S
MAKEUP: PATRICK ROSAS
COSMETICS: ESTEE LAUDER



GRILLED Pacific prawns on a bed of creamy leeks with marble potatoes and grilled vegetables with hollandaise sauce complements the 1999 Woddbridge Merlot, Robert Mondavi.

PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

BRAISED *buco* with Carmenere red wine sauced, wild mushroom, risotto and grilled vegetables accompanies the 001 Sunrise Carmnere, Concho y Toro

PENNE pasta tossed with aligue, crabmeat and pine nuts with grilled chorizo and 1999 Cabernet Roncaccio, E. Collavnini

ARTHUR Yang, P.L. Lim, Marivic Rufino, Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Chito Recto

A beloved black-tie event

THE NEW Year's Ball hosted annually by the Peninsula Manila is one of the country's most anticipated black-tie events. It harks back to the halcyon days of the sophisticated social scene when guests dressed to the hilt danced to live music.

Aside from the annual Christmas concert, the ball is the only special event held at The Lobby, one of Makati's power spots. People can watch the dancing and music making from the balconies.

The cavernous space creates an ambience that perfectly suits such a glamorous event. The balusters are festooned with colorful accoutrements, and festive décor add to the towering Christmas centerpiece. Tables and chairs are elegantly dressed and adorned with party favors. Highlight of the ball is the New Year countdown, led by Nonoy Lopez's band. Balloons drop from the high ceiling and confetti pour like shimmering rain.

The ball figuratively started rolling on Dec. 31, 1994, before the hotel and closed down for renovations. Capitalizing on the peak of the ballroom dance trend, the hotel decided to hold its own dinner-dance at The Lobby. Women and their DIs danced enthusiastically to the bands of Lady Valerie and Nonoy Lopez.

A resounding success, the event was.

For the succeeding years' repeats, families booked tables and rooms so they wouldn't have to brave the usual fireworks smog afterwards. The event attracted Manila's Finest—regulars from such families as the Yuchengcos, Rufinos, Siguion-Reynas, Tuasons and Arroyos.

Every January, the hotel committee evaluates the last Ball and starts planning the next one in the summer. By midyear, the budget is allotted for menu, décor, entertainment, services, mailers, etc.

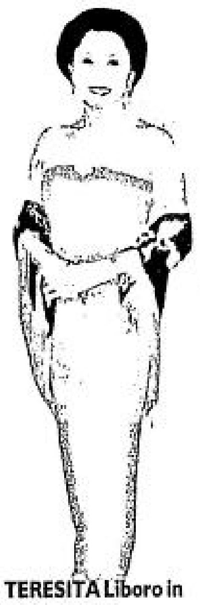
Tickets for last year's dance fetched P4,000 net per head. Families either got tables for four at P16,000 or for a dozen at P48,000. Many availed of the hotel's pre-paid package that included an overnight stay and breakfast.

Last New Year's Eve, the ballroom evoked a forest setting with accents of yellow and red. According to the social x-rays, the "usual suspects" had opted to celebrate either overseas or in Calatagan, Boracay or Tagaytay.

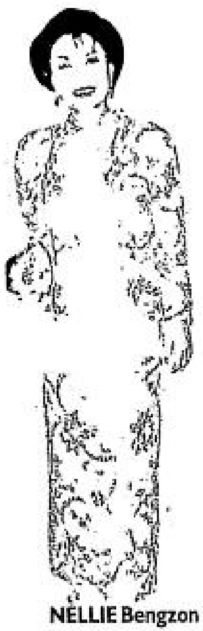
To the delight of those present, attendance was under 500, creating a more intimate atmosphere. They drank Peninsula's Champagne Deutz to that!

For the Manila Pen's annual New Year's Ball, guests don their best clothes and jewelry. Even little boys are in formal suits

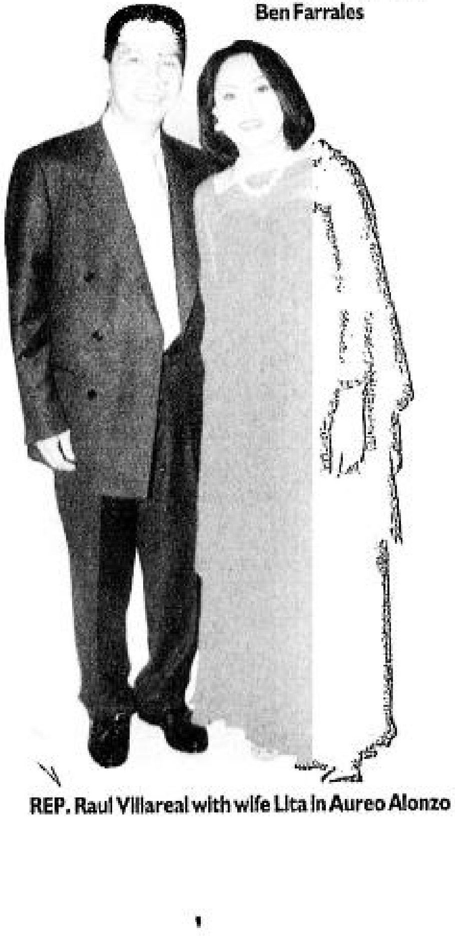
MARISA Rocha wears Inno Sotto, Doody Tuason wears a vintage Vivienne Westwood



TERESITA Liboro in Malu Veloso



NELLIE Bengzon in Ben Farrales



REP. Raul Villareal with wife Lita in Aureo Alonzo

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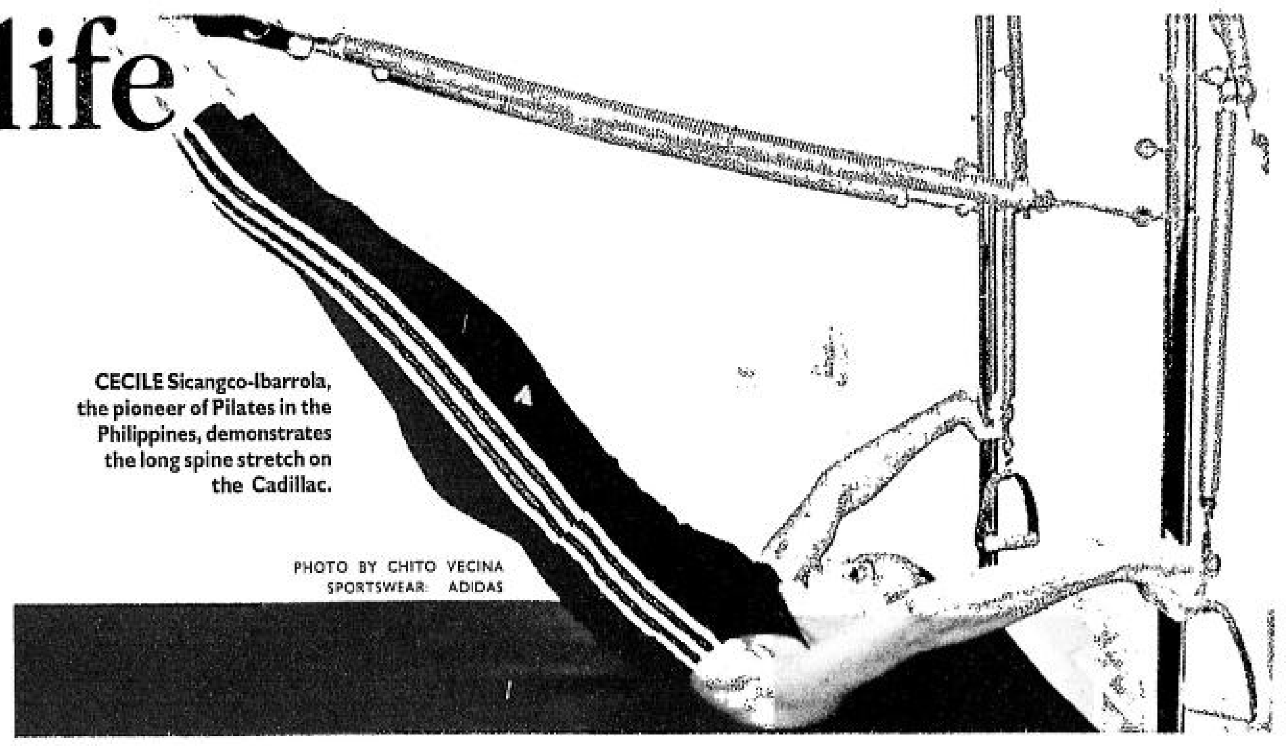
Pilates, for life

To sit in a good posture all day at the office takes muscle work—it's called isometric endurance. Few exercise systems teach this



CECILE Sicangco-Ibarrola, the pioneer of Pilates in the Philippines, demonstrates the long spine stretch on the Cadillac.

PHOTO BY CHITO VECINA
SPORTSWEAR: ADIDAS

THE BODY is meant to experience the world and enjoy life, but not in the way that "fitness journalism" has been promoting. Reportage of body awareness has focused more on looking good, rather a superficial aspect, than on strengthening oft-used muscles. And sometimes, in the pursuit of a trim figure, people end up with injuries and misalignments instead.

In other words, form over function seems to have become the norm. There is not enough emphasis on the importance of correct muscle "usage"—while doing deskwork, or while running around lifting and lugging stuff—to avoid distress for bones and muscles.

"To sit in a good posture all day at the office takes muscle work. It is called isometric endurance. Few exercise systems or equipment teach this," says Sean Gallagher, director of the original and official Pilates Studio in New York.

Baby boomers

The Pilates method of physical conditioning is not a fad that should be commuting between "what's in" and "what's out" lists. This exercise system focuses on enhancing the "powerhouse" to guarantee good posture and muscular alignment. The powerhouse, or the body's core, consists of the stomach, hips, lower back and buttocks.

Mat work is the basic program that creates a natural flow out of these movements and then improves their dynamics without sacrificing control. The movements are initiated by the core muscles.

"Pilates is something you do for life," says Gallagher. "In the United States, there's a large population of Baby Boomers who are hitting 50 and are keen on taking care of themselves. Also, in the States, hip fractures from slips and falls make up 70 percent of the reasons that people over 70 are brought to the emergency rooms. Prevention is better than cure."

He explains further: "Pilates also improves balance. At least twice a week, you learn to move the way you moved in the very beginning. In youth, your sphere of movement is broad. As you get older, the sphere gets narrower. Pilates teaches you how to move properly."

Progressive routine

The exercise routines follow the way a person learns to move through different stages in life. They start in a supine position, then progresses to the prone position—on all fours—then sitting, kneeling, and finally, standing.

"It has nothing to do with fat; it's all about function," Gallagher stresses. "You spend 50 minutes contracting the powerhouse muscles. You learn to stabilize and control them while you train your extremities in different configurations. That's how it works. You learn isometric endurance. In this computer age—in this 'sitting' society—that's very important."

The method, originally designed for boxers, was developed by German trainer Joseph Pilates. When modern dance was still being fine-tuned in terms of technique, pioneers such as Martha Graham went to Pilates to strengthen their core muscles and improve muscular balance and control. When a person needed a little help, the trainer would push and pull, providing resistance to help the person feel the muscles working.

Subsequently, Pilates designed over 20 pieces of equipment for the same purpose. These included the basic Reformer, a spring-based carriage used in conjunction with the mat work. The springs are adjusted according to the desired resistance. The lesser the resistance, the more muscle control is needed. Straps are connected to the carriage to work out the limbs. The powerhouse muscles should remain stable in the carriage while the straps work out the arms and legs.

"The muscle works like a spring," Gallagher explains. Resistance amplifies effort. While providing this resistance, the Reformer 'coaches' you on how to use the muscles."

Joe Pilates spent 50 years tweaking the system, Gallagher says, so that changing the number of springs in the carriage changes the whole dynamics of the exercise for a specific goal.

Engaging in the Pilates system does not necessarily guarantee the practitioner a body as toned as a dancer's or an athlete's. "It takes a lot more to get that," says Gallagher. "I myself have a bit of a belly, although I work out three or four times a week. But I maintain strength, flexibility and proper coordination—that's what it's all about."

- Marge C. Enriquez

(Brooke Siler's book "The Pilates Body" is available at the Integrated Body Arts Studio. For details, call 890-1286.)

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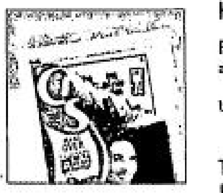

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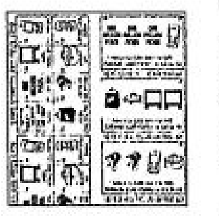

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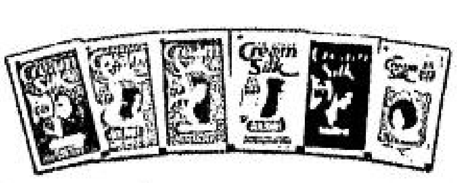

Per DOH-BFAD Permit NO. 0719 series of 2002.

E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph

SATURDAY Special

Editor Nestor U. Torre ◎ Associate Editor Edmund L. Sicam

At 60, Barbra Streisand keeps her main focus away from Hollywood

STREISAND. Her husband, James Brolin, has helped her shift her attention to personal rather than professional aspirations.

By Nekesa Mumbi Moody

NEW YORK—Barbra Streisand doesn't listen to most of today's pop music, likes to spend time tending to her rose garden, and isn't rushing to return to the silver screen.

While she may be the ultimate Hollywood diva, the 60-year-old singer isn't immersed in show business much these days—and she's loving that.

Content

"I'm content in my own life, and therefore I don't need work," Streisand said in a recent phone interview. "I'm very busy with my life and my family, and I try to have a good time without having to work."

Streisand hasn't made a movie since 1996's "The Mirror Has Two faces," and her latest album "Duets," released last month, contains only two new songs. The rest is duets from her long career, with singers ranging from Frank Sinatra to Donna Summer.

While some of the material dates back to the early 1960s, Streisand says she doesn't really think about her past work much. "It's not something that I have great nostalgia about."

Fond memories

She does have fond memories of her duet with Judy Garland on "Get Happy/Happy Days Are Here Again"—"That was a very special thing, to meet her, and to have her support, and to have her kind of cling on to me and feel protective of her."

Streisand plans to release new material sometime next year—an album of movie show tunes, from Shirley temple songs to more recent soundtrack hits.

Yet the eight-time Grammy winner doesn't keep up with today's pop scene. In fact, she says: "I don't ever listen to it. I can't make it out."

She recently went to see Eminem's hit movie debut "8 Mile" and had trouble following what the rapper was saying: "Most of the language I couldn't understand. It's like watching a foreign film."

However, she says, "This kid Eminem is really interesting. I can relate to the truth, and I can relate to emotion, and I can relate to him in some strange way . . . I was raised in the projects. I was born in Brooklyn. We were poor. I relate to that stuff because that's my roots, my heritage."

As far as her own movie career, the director and Academy Award-winning actress and composer is sifting through scripts, but not much interests her.

Garden

"I read things, but I feel very busy as a person, you know. I spend a lot of time in my garden. There's stuff that has to do with real life, not fantasy life."

Besides, she says, "It's time. It's nice to pass the torch, let the younger generation take over and strut their stuff."

Her passion for politics hasn't waned. The Democratic booster says she spends much of her day watching political programs and reading articles, which she posts on her website.

Of the recent midterm elections, in which Republicans took control of Congress, she says: "I think the first day or two after the election, I was completely discouraged. you kind of say, 'I'm not going to be involved in this anymore.' And then you say a few days after that—'Now is the time to fight even harder.'"

A favorite target of conservative pundits, she says: "What I resent is, one is kept in a box, like if you're an artist, you can't have political opinions?"

She credits her four-year marriage to actor James Brolin with helping shift her attention to personal rather than professional aspirations, They like to go out on long drives in their truck, and she's been spending much of her time overseeing construction on their new home and trading stocks.

"Believe me, I was very discouraged, but the market shows a certain kind of vitality now, so I find it real fun." *AP*

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Animated features vie for Oscar

By Nestor U. Torre

WHICH animated feature will romp off with the 2002 Oscar award for Best Animation? Last year, the first time the animation award category was instituted, only nine movies qualified ("Shrek" eventually won). For 2002, 17 animated features are deemed eligible—a heartening sign that animated movies have made a big comeback on the US film scene.

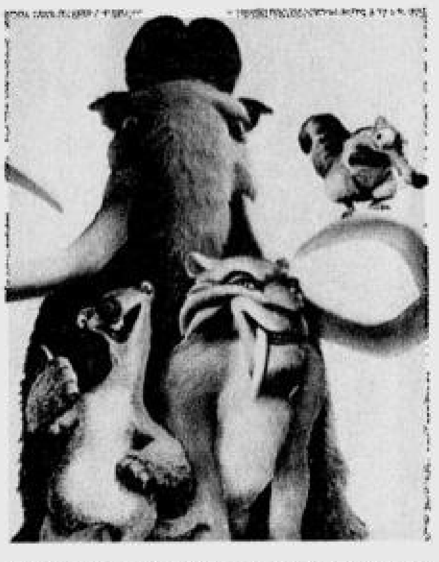
Likeliest contenders

And the likeliest contenders are—?

Since we don't get to see many new films here (blame it on movie distributors who import only films that they think will click with the local mainstream audience), we can't cover all the bases. But we *can* single out some probable contenders that have made it to our movie screens.

"Ice Age" appears to be a likely frontrunner because it's fully animated, and it's relatively original and witty. It goodnaturedly bends scientific facts to come up with a droll "personalized documentary" about prehistory, the migration of continents, some of the first humans interacting with now extinct animals—etc.!

Despite the liberties it so cheerfully takes with facts, "Ice Age" is a good way to interest young people in the earliest days of our planet, because it makes learning fun.



"ICE AGE." A likely frontrunner because it's fully animated.

Edgy

"Lilo & Stitch" is also cited, specifically for its edgy tone and style. Despite its visual inventiveness and idiosyncratic characters, the film still touches on values that come to bear on youngsters today.

Other likely contenders have yet to get to our screens, more's the pity, but one of them, "Spirited Away," has a lot to recommend itself, sight unseen: it won best film honors at last year's Berlin international filmfest.

The film tackles inventive but daunting material: a young girl's efforts to restore her parents back to human form. It springs from the fertile and "weird" imagination of Japan's master animator, Hayao Miyazaki.

Faith in God

"Jonah—A Veggie Tale Movie" is also getting a lot of media notice because it successfully uses animation to encourage young viewers to intensify their faith in God, and in other people.

What about films that combine animation with live action? Oscar rules have it that they can qualify for this special category if at least three-fourths of their running time has some form of animation.

By this standard, "Stuart Little, 2" makes the grade, so it's also a contender. But we expect that fully-animated features will get higher marks than movies that combine animated characters and live actors.

Some observations about the 2002 Metro filmfest

By Edmund L. Sicam

THE 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival officially ended yesterday but the top-grossing films will continue to screen at your favorite cinemas. Like previous festivals, the latest MMFF had its share of controversies but one thing can't be denied: this was the most successful in terms of box-office receipts. At last report, total gross for all nine films had already reached P280 million and was projected to exceed P300 million, by the time the films ended their run.

Some observations:

Disagreements

- Amidst disagreements on which was the better film, "Dekada '70" or "Mano Po," whether "Lapu-Lapu" and not "Mano Po" should have won the Gatpuno Antonio Villegas cultural award, and whether "Hula Mo, Huli Ko" shouldn't have won the Best Sound award because its audio track was mono-aural, the big winner was Regal's Mother Lily whose "Mano Po" swept the awards night and was No.1 at the box office.

In addition, her "Spirit Warriors" didn't do badly, winning the Third Best Picture award and placing No. 5 at the box office.

- Despite the festival's screening committee's protestations, it is obvious that star power, meaning box-office appeal, was the major consideration in the choice of entries. Or else, how explain the fact that "Lastikman" and "Spirit Warriors" didn't make it to the initial list? The reason is that Vic Sotto and the Street Boys are not in the same league as FPJ, Dolphy and Rudy Fernandez.

Now, Vic is having the last laugh: "Lastikman" is in second place while "Spirit Warriors" is in No. 5.

- Special effects played a major role in the festival, with six of the nine entries containing some form of visual wizardry, from the complicated (Lastikman swinging from the top of the Manila City Hall, and the Post Office building being smashed to smithereens) to the simple (the slomo bullet effects of "Hula Mo").

We've come of age in this department and the audience has responded favorably, with effects-filled "Lastikman" and "Agimat" placing No. 2 and No. 3, respectively, at the box office.

Strong showing

- The strong showing of "Lastikman" can be attributed to its visual magic, but promotions also contributed to its success. "Eat Bulaga," which is co-hosted by Vic Sotto, bombarded the screen with close to 10 daily airings of its trailer. The soundtrack was also played in the "Laban O Bawi" portion and the hosts kept making references to Vic's movie.

I didn't see "Lastikman's" trailers on other TV shows (I may be mistaken), so the noontime show must really have a strong following.

Trophies

- Awards contributed to the strong showing of "Mano Po." Before it harvested trophies on Dec. 27, the movie was in third or fourth place but when the awards were announced, it climbed to the top position. The same thing happened several years ago to "Muro-Ami," which won a lot of awards.
- The festival was a family affair not only because it featured movies for all members of the family but also because many of the entries were filled with relatives of the lead actors: three generations of Revillas in "Agimat"; Dolphy's army of relatives in "Home Alone da Riber"; Vic and Oyoboy Sotto in "Lastikman."
- There were no "R" rated films in the festival. The most severe rating received by the films was PG-13(viewers below 13 years old must be accompanied by adults), which went to "Dekada," "Hula Mo, Huli Ko," and "Lapu-Lapu."

"Hula's" producers were also asked to display the warning, "Parents are cautioned not to bring children below 13 years old to watch this movie." The others got the "G" rating, which means everyone could watch.

More of Hollywood's darkest secrets exposed

By Behn Cervantes

THE GREAT swashbuckler Errol Flynn was notorious for his ample intake of wine and nicotine. Of course, there were scores of women, too, often young enough to merit him a jail sentence, had his lawyer not been the adept Jerry Geisler.

In a sordid biography, it is said he went to Mexico for the beach boys, too. In another muck-digging Hollywood expose, it is rumored that he had flings with both Tyrone Power *and* Howard Hughes. Talk about appetite!

The Tasmanian devil(-may-care) star of "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "Robin Hood" and "Don Juan" certainly lived life to the hilt. In fact, ex-roommate David Niven tells of Flynn's exploits outside high schools where he awaited sexually-curious teenagers after their classes. The young Lolitas were overwhelmed by his presence and fell prey to his advances. He also secretly experimented with prohibited drugs, like cocaine.

However, Hollywood *knew* that silent star actor Bella Lugosi was a drug addict. The classical actor suffered from acute back pains, was prescribed morphine for them, but soon got addicted to it. The actor was the first Hollywood personality to admit his drug dependency. He went into rehab and was freed of the nasty habit.

Boris Karloff also suffered greatly from arthritis and had to take painkillers to ease the excruciating torment. The actor forever remembered as Frankenstein had a monster

MORE/D3

CAROLINO. The much-admired documentarist has come up with a new production, " Riles."

Independent cinema is staying alive

By Rica Arevalo

THE INDEPENDENT cinema is still alive despite the struggles and pains undergone by young filmmakers. There is always the lack of budget, the use of unknown actors and the scarcity of high-tech equipment, but the vision of the filmmaker still perseveres.

Tour

"Batang Trapo" by first-time director Mes de Guzman had its film festival tour this year. It was screened at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival (France), Fribourg International Film Festival (Switzerland), Singapore International Film Festival, Tubingen Short Film Festival (Germany), Asian-American Film Festival (New York), Marrakech Film Festival (Morroco, Africa) and Asiatica Filmmediale-Asian Cinema (Rome, Italy).

Its biggest achievement is getting the l'Etoile d 'Or Grand Prize for Short Film in the Marrakech filmfest. Locally, it won the Ishmael Bernal Award for Young Cinema at Cinemanila, first prize at the Gawad CCP for Film and Video, and the Best Short Film at the Gawad Urian film awards.

Streetchild

De Guzman is a writer and fictionist. His film is inspired by his experience of seeing a streetchild climb onto his car along Timog just to wipe his windshield.

In the feature-length category, "Batang West Side" by Lav Diaz staged a coup when it won the top award at the 15th Singapore International Film Festival. The five-hour-long picture bested 15 other films from China, Japan, Korea, Turkey, Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

It also won the Best Picture at Brussels. Its screening at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, Czech Republic was the first for a Filipino film.

As production designer Cesar Hernando recounts, "*Tinapos nung* audience down to the last credit titles, *nagulat ako.* For them, watching a film is a ritual. *Mataas ang* level of appreciation."

The film had its US premiere at the 25th Asian American International Film Festival last July at New York City, USA and the 10th Raindance Film Festival. Locally it won nine trophies at the Gawad Urian Film Awards.

Diaz may be called "stubborn" because of his refusal to reedit his film to a shorter version, but the man simply wants change. It is his rejection of the dictates of the mainstream system where the audience is "trained" to watch a film in two hours. Of course, local theater owners are not his fans right now.

Philippine premiere

For 2003, we look forward to the Philippine premiere of Ditsi Carolino's new documentary, "Riles." Carolino attended the Advanced Programme (Project Development Labs) of the National Film and Television School in London and "Riles" is the product of her one-year stay at the NFTS.

"Riles" had its world premiere at the prestigious International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam (IDFA) last November. It was well-received at the Sheffield International Documentary Festival, the United Kingdom's only festival for documentary in film and television. "Riles" next stop will be at the HOT DOCS, Canadian International Documentary Festival in April, 2003.

"Riles" is a full-length documentary about Eddie and Pen's family as they struggle to live decently along the railroad tracks of Manila. The social implications on the urban poor are evident in the documentary, and are intertwined with the couple's everyday life, but Carolino's attack is both meaningful and humorous.

These independent filmmakers continue to pursue their passion simply because they have a vision and are willing to take the risks involved in being a true artist of cinema.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM JAN. 11 - JAN. 17

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[illegible]	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Amba, Amba 8:30 Bida si Mister, Bida si Misis 9:30 FPJ Action Cinema 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Fox News 11:00 Business and Leisure	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *Oblivion* 11:30 Star Trek Voyager	6:00 Dragon Ball Z 6:30 Imbestigador 7:30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 Kakabakaba 9:30 Blockbuster Cinema 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Master Showman	6:00 Real TV 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7:00 Largo 8:00 7 Days 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *Joey*	7:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 8:00 Star For A Night 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 Kagat ng Dilim	6:00 Travel Time 6:30 The Beast Machines 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 E! News Weekend 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 E! News Weekend
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Anna Fegi stars in solo concert at Hard Rock

FEGI. A joy to work with.

By Andy P. Bais

THE YEAR 2002 was very busy for diminutive but exceptionally talented singer Anna Fegi, based on her impressive number of shows.

Musical

Just to name a few, she was part of the launch of the "Amazing Nights" series of Ryan Cayabyab at NBC Tent; appeared with the UST Symphony Orchestra in Kalibo and Boracay; launched the Philamlife Theater Voices series, and acted in the musical "Rocky Horror Show."

Anna was able to touch base with her growing number of regional admirers through her out-of-town singing engagements. She also did a TV commercial for Coke and started recording for her second album for BMG Records.

This year appears to be an even busier one for the hardworking Anna. She will kick off her string of important performances this year with her first solo concert, "Anna: This Is The Moment" at Hard Rock, Makati on Jan. 25, with no less than Side A and the Maneuvers as her special guests.

The concert is the culmination of Anna's more than three years of singing in Manila, after shifting her base from her native Cebu. (Call 7241762.)

Feat

Holding a solo concert is quite a feat for someone like Anna, especially since diva wannabes here are so numerous. Ironically, however, only a few can share the turf dominated by the likes of Regine Velasquez, Lani Misalucha and Zsa-Zsa Padilla. This early, it is safe to say that Anna is more than qualified to join their enviable company.

Despite her initial taste of success, Anna has remained unaffected. Concert producer and director Manolet Garcia swears that Anna is a rarity when it comes to professionalism.

"She comes to rehearsals prepared, is eager to learn, and she's open to suggestions. She's not like other female singers *na tamad mag-aral ng bagong* materials. Anna is a joy to work with," he beams.

God-given talent

For her part, the frizzy-haired Cebuana says she has no reason to become swell-headed. She has great faith in God and knows that her talent is God-given. *"Kahit gaano man ako kagaling*, I am not in control. *Kaya wala akong karapatang magmalaki*," she states.

Anna takes her craft seriously. "I have sacrificed so much because I really love to sing. *Napalayo ako sa aking mga* parents *at kapatid* and I had to quit school, *kaya hindi ko talaga ito pababayaan*," she avers.

Positive response

She confesses that she's happiest when she sees the smiling faces of people in the audience when she is performing. That's why she makes it a point to look into their eyes. "The positive response I get gives me strength each time I perform," she relates.

Anna admits that working with popular artists has boosted her self-confidence. "Like *sa* 'ASAP,' I am performing with the likes of Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez, *na dati ay pinapanood ko lang sa* TV!"

Aside from singing, Anna has also ventured into her other passion—theater acting. *"Iba kasi ang* discipline *sa* theater *at ito ang nagbibigay sa akin ng* balance to remain grounded."

Ballads

Anna loves listening to R & B songs but she feels that her voice is not yet ready for them. She is more at home singing ballads, and she can also do classical numbers. However, she laments the fact that, in this country, "good" singing means singers have to belt out songs most of the time, *"kasi yan ang gusto ng mga tao*. It's sad *kasi* there are many songs *na magandang kantahin na medyo* soft *lang*," she sighs.

After her solo concert, Anna will embark on a musical journey aboard the Superstar Leo of the Star Cruises family, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2. Her classical-pop concert will also feature famous concert pianist Raul Sunico (call 521-5125).

'Lapu-Lapu' is a movie unworthy of its hero

By Rito P. Asilo

BRINGING the legendary life of Lapu-Lapu, the country's first folk hero, at the big screen was a good idea. But the movie about him has proven unworthy of its subject. The truth is, very little is known about the hero's life, and we are not sure how much liberty was taken by the movie's creators to adapt his story to film.

Ambitions

If anything, the ambitious, tedious and protracted (two hours and 15 minutes) movie only managed to show a myopic, ultimately not-too-flattering view of the hero.

In a nutshell, William Mayo's film dramatizes Lapu-Lapu's (Lito Lapid) storybook legend as leader of the seven rich balangays of Mactan, a constant source of envy among the rajahs and datus of neighboring islands.

This culminates in Fernando de Magallanes' (we know him better as Ferdinand Magellan, played by Dante Rivero) arrival and eventual death at the hands of Lapu-Lapu himself, and Lapu-Lapu's capture and execution by a grieving Humabon (go figure).

Motivations

Trouble is, the characters in this film are written as one-dimentional "cartoon" characters whose motivations are limned in black and white—there's really not much in it that we don't already know: He was named after a fish because fishermen in his village enjoyed a bountiful harvest when he was born; he was a stern implementor of his laws; and he was a fearless, ruthless warrior.

Sadly, Jerry Tirazona's script does not provide sufficient depth to its central character, the great Filipino who led the first anti-Spanish revolt in 1521.

Dramatic possibilities

This is sad because his story (and Magellan's as well) has real dramatic possibilities. What we simply see are snippets of history (Magellan's meeting with Rajah Kulambo in Limasawa, the introduction of Christianity to the Philippines, Rajah Humabon and his wife's baptism), but these don't give us an emotional and psychological attachment to fully understand the politicking that transpires among the green-faced datus (other than to say that they're jealous of him), who allegedly wanted Magellan to conquer Lapu-Lapu so that they could break his stronghold over Mactan.

To be fair, "Lapu-Lapu" is not campy and does not come off as a pretentious production. It is simply tedious and much too long for the modest content that it has.

'8 Mile' preview on Jan. 13

AND 1 basketball footwear and apparel company, in cooperation with United International Pictures and Viva International Pictures, brings viewers the advance screening of "8 Mile," the much-anticipated film debut of controversial and multi-awarded rap artist Eminem.

EMINEM. Has gotten good reviews for his first film performance.

Boundaries

"8 Mile" is a story about boundaries that define our lives, and a young man's struggle to find the strength and courage to transcend them.

From Academy Award-winner Curtis Hanson, director of "LA Confidential" and "Wonder Boys," "8 Mile"also stars Kim Basinger, Mekhi Phifer and Brittany Murphy.

Extravaganza

AND 1 slam-dunks this silver screen extravaganza on Jan. 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Cinema 6, Glorietta 4. Free tickets are available at AND 1 Playground stores and some other sporting goods stores, with the purchase of AND 1 gear.

More of . . .

From page D2

of a problem, with drugs as a result.

They needed succor but there was no professional help to be had. Besides, it was a shameful problem to have at the time. It was considered a sign of character weakness and a flaw to be socially condemned and scoffed at.

But, we saw the likes of Elizabeth Taylor admitting her many years of alcohol intake, and her dependency on prescribed drugs that debilitated her illustrious life.

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New films give 2003 a lively start

By Nestor U. Torre

FANS of ace Chinese director Zhang Yimou will be glad to know that he has another outstanding film coming up—"Hero," an epic adventure topbilling Jet Li, Zhang Ziyi, Maggie Cheung and Tony Leung.

Assassins

Li plays Nameless, a county sheriff, Leung and Cheung are assassins named Broken Sword and Flying Snow, respectively, and Zhang Ziyi is Broken Sword's devoted servant, Moon.

SEAGAL. Co-stars with rapper Ja Rule in "Half Past Dead."

The film is set during China's Warring States period, when the country was divided into seven feuding kingdoms, forcing the populace to endure decades of suffering and death.

The monarch of the Qin Kingdom is particularly bent on conquering all of China, and assassins are sent to kill him. The king promises untold riches to anyone who can foil the assassins, and Nameless comes forth.

But it turns out that his relationship with the king is not as forthright as it initially appears. It is eventually revealed as an awesome tale of love, honor and duty, worthy of the title "Hero."

Champion boxer

From the sublime to the comical: In "I Spy," Eddie Murphy plays a champion boxer and Owen Wilson is a super agent who go undercover to retrieve a missing US Air Force stealth bomber.

Meanwhile, in "Daredevil," Ben Affleck finally achieves his dream of playing a superhero—only, he's a lawyer blinded by a freak accident that endows him with super-charged senses.

Colin Farrell is Bullseye, the villain with perfect aim, while Michael Clarke Duncan is the crime lord kingpin.

In "One Hour Photo," Connie Nielson plays a woman whose family becomes the obsession of a photo clerk (Robin Williams) who keeps copies of their snapshots as part of his deranged fantasy.

Update

For their part, Hugh Grant and Sandra Bullock co-star for the first time in the new romantic comedy "Two Weeks Notice." The film is an update on the Cinderella tale, with Grant playing a charming but utterly undependable mega-millionaire, and Bullock is his overworked legal counsel.

Grant is so difficult to work for that Bullock finally calls it quits. That's when he starts missing her and belatedly tries to make up for lost time, leaving Bullock's boyfriend (Mark Feurstein) in the lurch. Well, when your romantic rival turns out to be Prince Charming, you know you're licked!.

Finally, "Half Past Dead" hits Metro Manila theaters today with its story of revenge and redemption, enlivened by spectacular action sequences "choreographed" by Hong Kong fight master Xin Xin Xiong.

But this is no Chinese martial-arts production. It stars Steven Seagal and Ja Rule, and Seagal's love interest is played by Fil-American TV-film star Nia Peeples.

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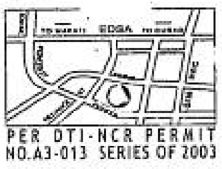

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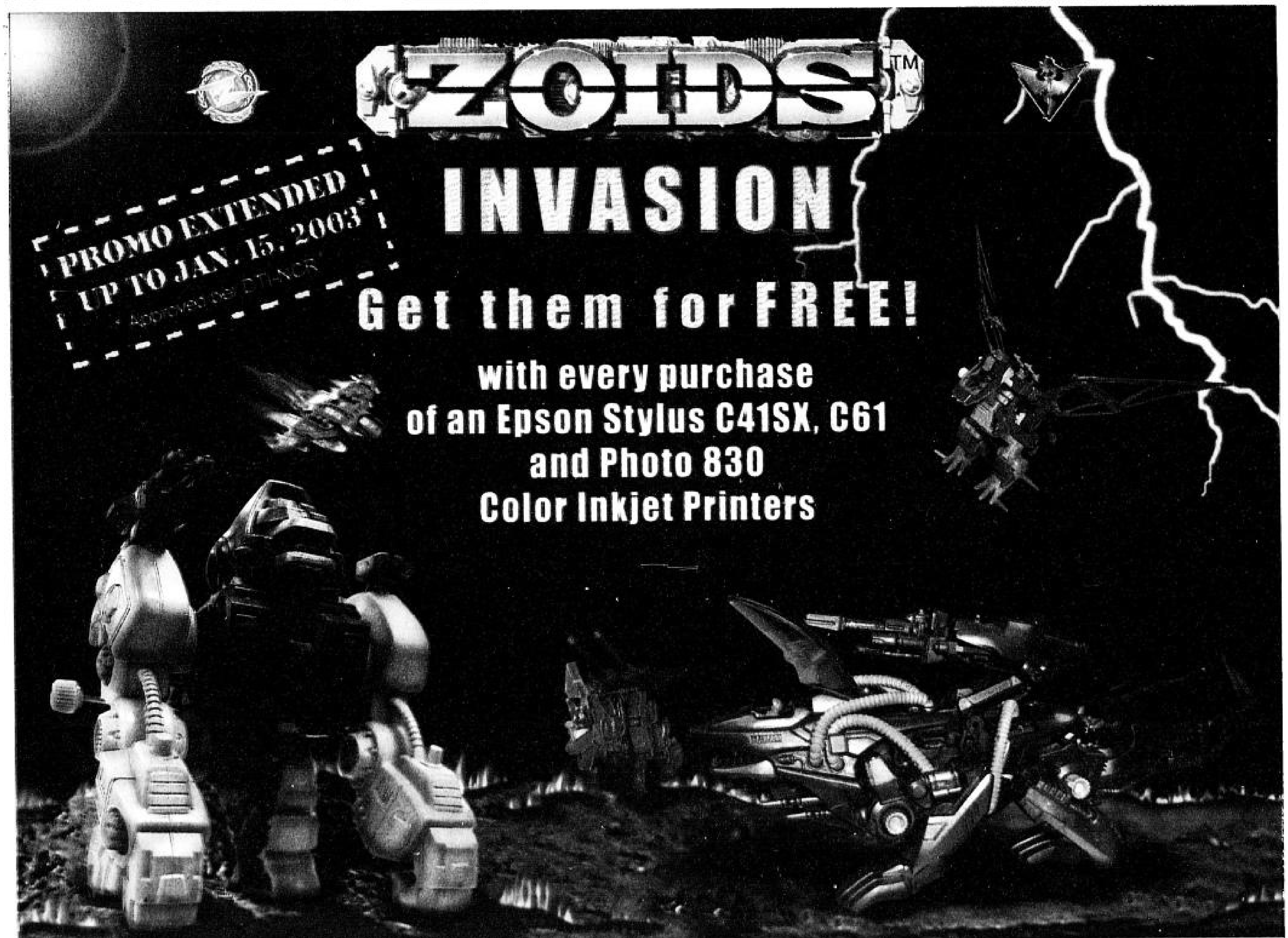
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SATURDAY Special

John Cusack is edgy and vital in 'Max'

By Sheila Norman-Culp

NEW YORK—John Cusack brings an edgy vitality to "Max," the story of a German-Jewish art dealer who befriends a sniveling, nail-biting, deeply confused misfit struggling to become an artist.

Oh, and the misfit's name is Adolf Hitler.

Directorial debut

Menno Meyjes, nominated for an Oscar for his screenplay of Alice Walker's "The Color Purple," makes his directorial debut with a fiction that some critics worried would humanize Hitler.

Certainly, Meyjes' film does not romanticize him. Noah Taylor's foaming-at-the-mouth Hitler is an impoverished outcast searching for acceptance, concocting unscientific "pure blood" theories to try to explain the chaos and upheaval of post-World War I Germany.

Contrast

The contrast between Cusack's fictional Max Rothman and Hitler, both German army veterans, could not be more dramatic. Born of a wealthy family, Max is a Renaissance man whose wit flows easily from art to science, politics, medicine or philosophy.

Max is swept up by the exuberance of modernism. He's an optimist who believes in the transforming power of art.

Hitler is penniless, without friends or family, mocked by his army buddies. He yearns to be a "true" artist, but his portfolio of dog portraits and pastoral scenes is dismissed as amateur in the avant-garde world of Munich in 1918. *AP*

CUSACK. Plays an art dealer who befriends a struggling artist named—Adolf Hitler!

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FAMILY TIES

Vilma as her mom, sister see her

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

SANTOS. She had less time to play when she started acting when she was only nine years old.

EMELYN, Vilma Santos' older sister, shares her insider views on her superstar sibling:

"*Madalas kaming magkasama.* Three years *ang agwat namin kaya kapag pumapasok kami, sabay kami sa* school bus.

"*Kapag nauubusan siya ng baon, papasok siya sa* room *ko at magpapaalam sa* teacher *ko para humingi ng baon.* Thoughtful *siya, kaya nauubos ang baon niya, binibili niya ng pasalubong yung* younger sisters (Tess and Winnie) *namin.*

Make-believe

"*Maliit pa 'yan mahilig nang mag-*make-believe. *May* notebook *siyang maliit at nagsusulat siya doon ng* dialogue. She liked to pretend that she was a doctor and our younger sisters *ang* patients *niya.* She had less time to play when she started acting at only nine years of age.

"As a teenager, she was sometimes late for school because she took such a long time to fix her hair. Very particular *siya sa ayos ng kanyang buhok!*

"Favorite actress *niya si* Lolita Rodriguez because of her professionalism and ability to mingle with different types of people. Like Lolita, *gusto niyang mapalapit sa tao. Malambing siya sa* fans *niya. Kapag may* project *siya, tinatanong niya muna ang kanyang* fans *kung magugustuhan nila.*

Exam

"As a mom, she makes it a point to be there for her children. *Noong nasa* high school *si* Luis (Lucky), she made it a point to go to his room to check on his school diary. *Kapag may* exam, *tinuturuan niya ang kanyang mga anak at pagkatapos gumagawa pa siya ng* test to check *kung naintindihan ng mga bata ang* lesson.

"*Kapag may sakit ang mga anak niya, hindi siya natutulog. Magdamag siyang nagbabantay.*

"She loves watching TV. *Sa bahay, siya ang* TV guide *namin. Alam niya lahat ng palabas mula* Monday *hanggang* Sunday. She's very thoughtful, *lagi niyang pinaghahanda ng pagkain si* Ralph. *Isa lang ang alam niyang gawin, yung* meal-in-one.

"*Kapag may nakikita siyang nagluluto, tinatanong niya kung paano ito ginagawa.* She's interested in cooking, she just doesn't have time to learn.

Very close

"As sisters, we're all very close. When we were younger, *sabay-sabay kami kung maligo.* If we're quiet, she's very concerned and immediately asks us if we have a problem. As a daughter, she always reminds our mom to avoid sweets because she's diabetic."

Milagros T. Santos, Vilma's mom, adds: "As a child, *madalas siyang sumali sa mga* school programs. Very active and interested *siya* in entertaining her classmates and teachers. She's very friendly. She also loved to play with play money and pretended that she was the teller of a bank. *Sina* Tess, Winnie, Emelyn and Sonny Boy *ang* customers *niya!*

"As a teenager, she was already busy as an actress, I was always with her. *Maraming lumiligaw sa kanya, mga* partners *niya sa* movies *o anak ng mga kaibigan ko, pero hindi niya masyadong pinapansin ang mga* suitors *niya* because she loved acting. I stopped being her chaperone when she got married to Edu (Manzano).

Birthday

"*Malambing siya sa akin. Kahit may asawa na siya,* she still confides in me. I live in the States, but our closeness is still intact. When it's my or her sisters' (Tess and Winnie) birthday, she makes it a point to greet us. The problem of one is the problem of all. *Noong mag-ma-*mayor *pa lang siya,* she continuously communicated with us.

"*Lagi siyang may hawak na panyo. Kahit may* meeting *lang siya, lagi siyang may katabing panyo. Lahat ng panyo niya may ka-ternong damit!*

"The only thing that she doesn't like about our *Pasko* is the usual *noche buena* fare. *Sawang-sawa na siya sa kare-kare, embutido at lechon. Pero hindi siya magsasawa sa* pasta dishes *at sa* hot chocolate. *Gusto din niya yung ensaymada* with white cheese."

Sex flicks' titles take the cheesecake

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

UNHAPPILY and quite boringly, sex flicks again dominated the local movie industry's output last year. Adding insult to injury, some of their titles were among the strangest or silliest to have sprung from the addled brows of scriptwriters:

"Bibingka—Apoy sa Ilalim, Apoy sa Ibabaw." "Hinog sa Pilit, Sobra ang Tamis." "Eva—Lason Kay Adan." "Ligaya—Pantasya ng Bayan." "Katawan Mo, Langit Ko."

"Tukaan." "Hubad na Multo." "Halik sa Aking Lupa." "Itlog." "Masarap Ba ang Bawal?" "Pagsaluhan."' And, the runaway champion, "Kapag ang Palay Naging Bigas, May Bumayo." How—agricultural!

Why did the chicken cross the road?

Our special thanks to Mr. Loi Landicho of Makati City for making our New Year brighter—and funnier—with these witty musings:

"Why did the chicken cross the road? For many years now, this question has continued to bother us. Find out why, according to famous Filipino personalities:

"**President GMA:** 'Because it was right, it was the best thing to do. And so, God took care of the rest of the chicken's journey.'

"**Miriam Defensor-Santiago:** 'Asking such inconsequential mediocrity is a waste of time. We discuss toads at UP, not fowls. Suffice it to say, I cannot comment on insipid queries involving species of lower life forms.'

"**VP Teofisto Guingona:** 'I accuse the chicken of violating traffic laws by crossing the road!'

"**Sec. Hernando Perez:** 'The chicken has a secret nest with hundreds of eggs at the other side of the road.—But we have yet to prove it.'

"**Sen. Ping Lacson:** 'I will resign from the Senate if Sec. Perez can prove that the chicken has laid hundreds of eggs in a secret nest!'

"**NBI Chief Wycoco:** 'Was it a chicken? Yes, it was a chicken. It doesn't look like a chicken, though. However, a deeper probe into the animal revealed that it was really a chicken. But do not quote me on that, our forensics experts need to verify if it was indeed a chicken.'

"**Clarissa Ocampo:** 'I was surprised when the chicken did it. I was one foot away when it crossed the road.'

"**Madam Cory Aquino:** 'If only Ninoy were alive today, he would be able to explain why.'

"**ISAFP Chief Col. Victor Corpus:** 'My new witness will debunk claims that the chicken crossed the road. Ladies and gentlemen, my witness—Ador Mawanay!'

"**Dr. Jose Rizal:** '*Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinaggalingan/Ay hindi makakalipad sa paroroonan.*'

"**Meralco:** 'How could that be illegal? The government allowed it!'

"**Boy Abunda:** 'A rooster is waiting on the other side. They'll have a private conversation.'

"**Raul Roco:** 'How am I supposed to know? I was the last person to be informed. This is unfair. I smell politics here.'

"**Imelda Marcos:** 'Some chickens are smarter than others.'

"**GSIS Pres. Winston Garcia:** 'To save a heritage.'

"**KMU's Teddy Casiño:** 'To question the chicken's motives is curtailment of its freedom to cross the road, and therefore a violation of chicken rights.'

"**GMA-7:** 'It's where the chicken belongs.'

"**Janice de Belen:** 'God was on its side when it crossed the road.'

"**Kris Aquino:** '*Sasgutin natin ang tanong na yan sa pagbabalik ng*—The Buzz!'

"**Nora Aunor:** My brother is not a chicken!

"**Christopher de Leon:** 'Can I use a lifeline?'

"**Fr. Robert Reyes:** 'I was running after it.'

"**Cardinal Sin:** 'It was the moral thing to do.'

"**Bro. Wilde Almeda:** '*Gagaling! Lalakas! Tatawid sa kalsada!* Alelujah! Praise the Lord, *mga minamahal!*'

"**Bro. Eli Soriano:** '*Tarantado yang manok na yan! Hindi niya alam ang kanyang ginagawa! Mabuti ka n'yo at hindi nasagasaan!*

"**Bro. Mike Velarde:** "*Kagustuhan 'yan ni* Yahweh El Shaddai. Amen? Amen!'

"**Melanie Marquez:** 'Because it has long-legged!'"

Focus on SSPE

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

WHEN the SSPE Children Care Foundation Inc. was registered last Nov. 20, 2001, our vision was to participate aggressively in the drive to eradicate contagious childhood diseases whose complications lead to early death or loss of quality life.

Information

The tasks that this foundation commits itself are: to help provide information regarding measles and its late complications, resulting in severe health impairment and early death, possibly from SSPE; and to help provide medical assistance to children, particularly those who are in the early stages of SSPE, in the hope of achieving recovery.

The disease of particular interests to the SSPE Children Care Foundation is Subacute Sclerosing Pancephalitis (SSPE), which is described in a medical encyclopedia as "a neurologic disorder caused by persistent infection with the measles (rubeola) virus."

SSPE tends to occur several years after a child's having measles and appearing to recover from it normally. SSPE has an incubation period of one to 10 years.

Rare complication

Measles is a typically self-limiting illness, but its rare complication, SSPE, is a slow-developing fatal condition. Its onset comes within five to 20 years of age, predominantly in males.

The measles virus has an incubation period of 12 to 19 days. As age increases, the risk of measles encephalitis as a complication of infection also increases.

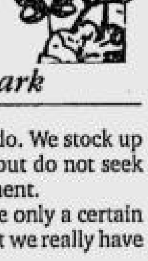
Children who are malnourished experience a more serious affliction. For example, measles remains a major killer in Africa, in which 1.5 to two million deaths per year are caused by the virus. But after infection to measles, there is complete resistance to reinfection. *(To be concluded)*

NEW patient John Carlo Mituda, 11.

Meaning of life

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark



THE BEGINNING of a new year is a good time to introspect on life's direction and goals. Some insights:

Spiritual nature

Human life is most precious because we are endowed with the ability to seek our eternal interests. Animals cannot see beyond eating, sleeping, mating and defending. But humans can inquire into their spiritual nature and attain the goal of self-realization.

There are many things we do, but we often neglect that which we really *need* to do. We stock up on material food but do not seek spiritual nourishment.

Our bodies have only a certain period to exist. But we really have no beginning and end because we are eternal spirit souls. When we realize our eternal nature, we will seek out eternal home and our eternal Beloved.

Focus

There is a world where there is only one focus and one center—the most loving, Supreme Person. In that world, everyone's concern is to please the Supreme Beloved, to serve and love Him forevermore.

A lover of the Supreme is not afraid of death or time. He knows he has the shelter and protection of the Master. God protects the surrendered soul at all times, under all conditions.

A year that has passed is a year closer to the demise of our material bodies. Time takes away not only youth but also some of our abilities.

Yet, in such a humbled condition, may we simply offer our remaining energy, thoughts and devotion at the lotus feet of the Supreme, Who has promised to accept all offerings made with love. That, after all, is the meaning of life.

Decision to live

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

Yes, my dearest child. I have decided to live. That means, I have decided *not* to die. From this day forward, I am not going to do anything that will shorten, impair, debase, ruin, injure, harm, hurt and cheapen this life.

Little things

The series of little things that happened to me in the past few weeks have helped me come to this decision. I'll run through them at random and try to make you see how the very ordinariness of it all contributed to the profound lessons I learned:

During the holidays, Susan Fuentes came to visit. Susan (who sang "Miss Kita Kung Krismas" many Yuletides ago) went through dialysis for several years until she had a renal transplant late last year. Initially, her system rejected the kidney donated to her.

During the lowest moments of her life, Susan did nothing but pray. She claimed God's promise of deliverance and rebuked anything and everything that she believed was not His. Now, Susan bursts with energy and joy and every word that escapes her lips glorifies the Lord.

Countdown

Just before the countdown to the new year, Boyet died. He was quite young, only in his late 30s. The last time I saw him was in the dialysis center on the eve of Christmas. He had a blank stare, an enlarged heart, and money for his dialysis became scarcer and scarcer.

I went to his wake in his home in Sta. Maria, Laguna. I saw his wife. Nobody could fathom her thoughts. Was she sad that her husband had died—or was she relieved that their conjugal ordeal was finally over, and she could now move on with her life?

Just before the holidays, I found a new friend—Mrs. Lim of Policarpio st. in Mandaluyong City. She has a brother who was on dialysis for many years but who is now completely cured. Yes, not just healed. No more dialysis, kidneys functioning well again, and credit for the miracle is attributed to a kind of grass that his wife boiled, which he drank as tea everyday.

On my first dialysis appointment for the year, a new patient came to the center. My heart sank at the sight of her. She is so beautiful—and so young, not a year older than 17. Her kidneys just conked out on her and she now has to spend four hours three times a week for her dialysis.

I began to think of the things she can no longer do—at 17. At that age, people's thoughts are busy with dreams and ambitions. Could she still be thinking of soirees, picnics, beach volleyballs, wall climbing, debut parties and weddings?

Clara, do you know what has happened to Ernie Maceda? The last time I heard of him, a warrant was issued for his arrest for supposedly rousing up the rabble in what has now come to be known as Edsa Tres. I got the biggest surprise when I read that he has become more spiritual after being touched by God through Sister Glo.

His diabetes and other ailments have been cured through the intercession of Blessed Mother Ignacia. And with the same passion with which he rose as a star in politics, he is now a renewed believer in Christ.

And, Clara, do you remember Lulubelle Lam Ramos? A few weeks before Christmas, I was shocked when news came that she had died. She was one of my dearest friends—one of the best reporters in the entertainment beat. She died lonely and friendless.

The movie stars whose careers she had helped build and whom she defended passionately against their most rabid detractors were nowhere near her coffin. And she died bitter, too. With her bitterness, she was dead long before she drew her last.

Big problem

Do you also remember Mimi? She had a mastectomy and, when I saw her two years ago, she was cadaverous. A few days ago, I saw her again. She has a big problem—she is overweight and discussed with me the most effective diet to lose her excess pounds! From cancer of the breast, she's now looking at a full life after having been cured by a healer in Mandaluyong.

And I don't know if you still remember Wendell. He's been on dialysis for a little more than a year now, and he has decided he's had enough of it. A week ago, he went back to his native Mindoro—to wait for the Grim Reaper. All the tearful protestations of his family, relatives and friends fell on ears made deaf by his decision to die.

Capacity

Well, Clara, as for me, I have decided to live. More, to improve the quality of my life. I hereby resolve to watch my diet, to rest and never tire myself beyond my capacity to cope with my ailment, to be faithful to my schedule for taking medicines, to always be prompt and cheerful for my dialysis appointments, and to be kind to my doctors and caregivers—not to abuse my condition by being a source of pain for those assigned to take care of me.

My decision to live also means I'm now going to take time to smell more flowers, discover friends in more strangers, and connect with people on a person-to-person basis, not just on the level of need.

I have decided to live. This ultimately means I have decided to have a life that is happy, meaningful and truly alive. If God decides to grant me the blessing of a total cure, that's His business. Meanwhile, I shall busy myself with the serious business of living my life to the fullest!

A perfect vacation

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

WHISTLER, British Columbia, Canada—I've just experienced the most wonderful vacation of my life!

Whistler is a ski resort in the northern part of Vancouver. It is about an hour and half drive to this paradise. Here, one will find the most beautiful sceneries, as well as some of the best ski slopes in the world.

Celebrities

The town of Whistler also boasts of many fine-dining restaurants. During this time of the year, the entire village is all white with snow. Celebrities such as Prince Charles and his sons often come here to ski.

THE AUTHOR (standing, left) in Canada.

We arrived morning of the 27th of December. As soon as we settled in, we immediately played in the snow—sledding, snow ball fights and just horsing around.

Skiing lessons

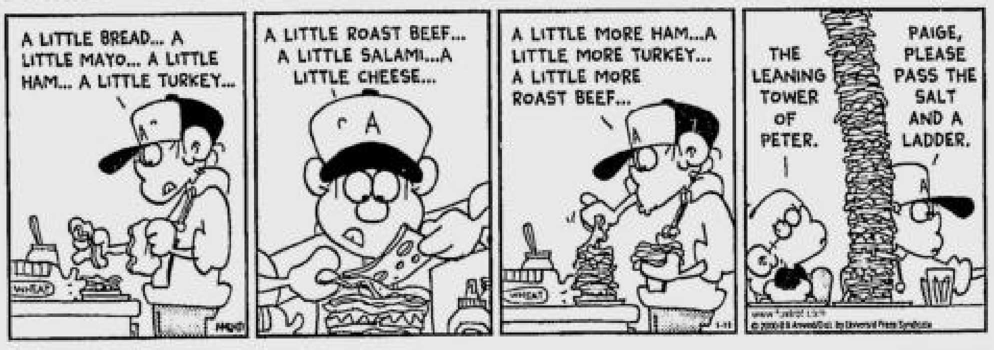
The following morning, my whole family took skiing lessons. By the afternoon, we were courageously gliding down the slopes. Kids pick it up so much faster than us old bones.

The scenery was absolutely gorgeous and people were all in a good mood. As we boarded the ski lifts, there was a live band performing to give the day a party atmosphere. Fun! *(To be concluded)*

E-mail me at sandydaza@shaw.ca

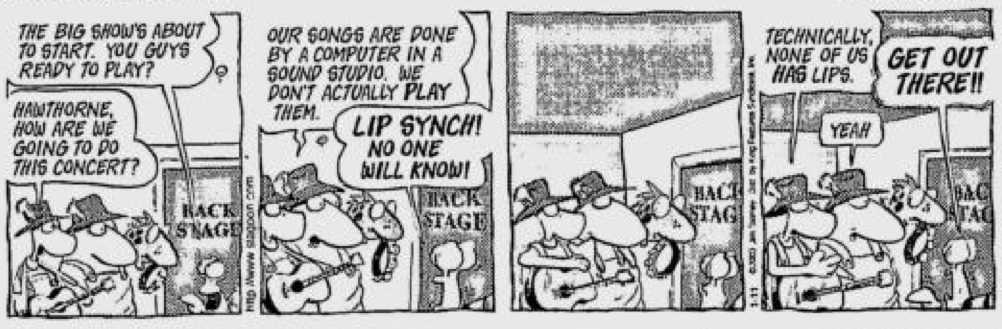
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


A LITTLE BREAD... A LITTLE MAYO... A LITTLE HAM... A LITTLE TURKEY...
A LITTLE ROAST BEEF... A LITTLE SALAMI...A LITTLE CHEESE...
A LITTLE MORE HAM...A LITTLE MORE TURKEY... A LITTLE MORE ROAST BEEF...
THE LEANING TOWER OF PETER.
PAIGE, PLEASE PASS THE SALT AND A LADDER.

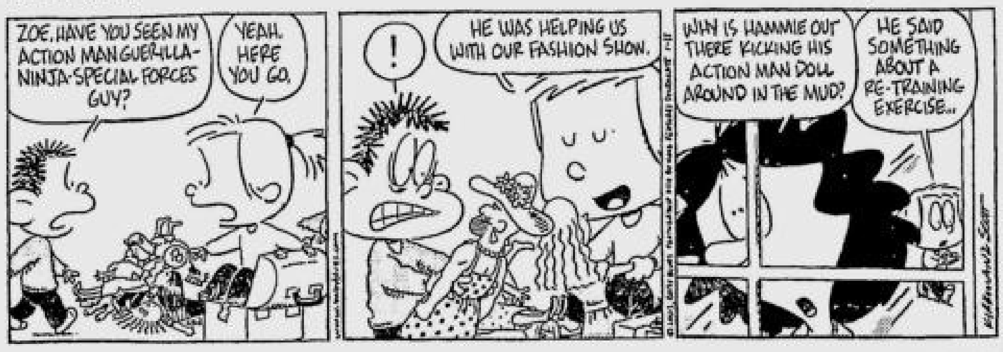
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


THE BIG SHOW'S ABOUT TO START. YOU GUYS READY TO PLAY?
HAWTHORNE, HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THIS CONCERT?
BACK STAGE
OUR SONGS ARE DONE BY A COMPUTER IN A SOUND STUDIO. WE DON'T ACTUALLY PLAY THEM.
LIP SYNCH! NO ONE WILL KNOW!
TECHNICALLY, NONE OF US HAS LIPS.
GET OUT THERE!!
YEAH

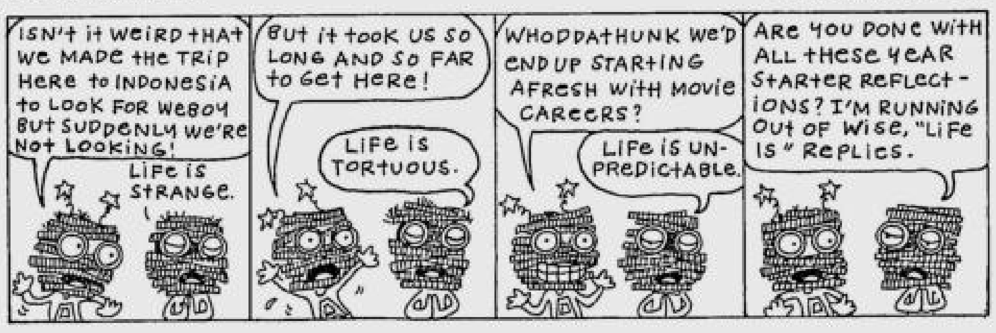
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, HAVE YOU SEEN MY ACTION MAN GUERILLA-NINJA-SPECIAL FORCES GUY?
YEAH. HERE YOU GO.
!
HE WAS HELPING US WITH OUR FASHION SHOW.
WHY IS HAMMIE OUT THERE KICKING HIS ACTION MAN DOLL AROUND IN THE MUD?
HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A RE-TRAINING EXERCISE...

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ISN'T IT WEIRD THAT WE MADE THE TRIP HERE TO INDONESIA TO LOOK FOR WEBOY BUT SUDDENLY WE'RE NOT LOOKING!
LIFE IS STRANGE.
BUT IT TOOK US SO LONG AND SO FAR TO GET HERE!
LIFE IS TORTUOUS.
WHODDATHUNK WE'D END UP STARTING AFRESH WITH MOVIE CAREERS?
LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE.
ARE YOU DONE WITH ALL THESE YEAR STARTER REFLECTIONS? I'M RUNNING OUT OF WISE, "LIFE IS" REPLIES.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Naomi Judd, Clarence Clemons, Amanda Peet, Kim Coles

Happy Birthday: Nothing will hold you back or stop your momentum once you get going this year. Your powerful desire to accomplish your dreams will lead to the success you're looking for. You will have what it takes this year to make a difference. Your numbers are 1, 15, 27, 34, 36, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You should ready yourself for some much-needed change. It's time to update your looks and go after the lifestyle you desire. You have plenty of options available to you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be careful when dealing with a busybody. This individual may twist your words or reveal something that you really didn't want spread around. Rid yourself of someone who's a fair-weather friend.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll have little concern for what's going on with other people. Back up a few steps before someone you do care about begins to feel neglected. Your fickle nature will cause jealousy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Your sensitive nature will allow you to pick up on the feelings of others. You can make a difference if you are thoughtful and lend a helping hand.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be flashy and full of fun today, so be sure to make plans to socialize. You will be the life of any event you attend and your ability to take control of any situation will be an obvious asset.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't dwell on what's already happened. Take the initiative and look out for yourself. The damage control you do now will be worth its weight in gold. Concentrate on your future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can make money if you invest in something long-term. Help a friend who isn't as capable as you with money matters. You should terminate situations that are no longer to your benefit.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Get out and enjoy the social scene. Expand your horizons by being receptive to the thoughts and ideas of others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Social activity should be penciled in today. A brand-new friendship will develop if you are outgoing and easy to approach. Be ready for adventure and travel.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will have the chance to do something romantic today. If you are already in a relationship, make special plans for two. If you are single, you'll meet someone who can rock your world.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your ability to come up with original ideas will attract someone who interests you. Proposals will be extremely well-done and very tempting. Don't pass up the chance to do something that could potentially turn your life around.

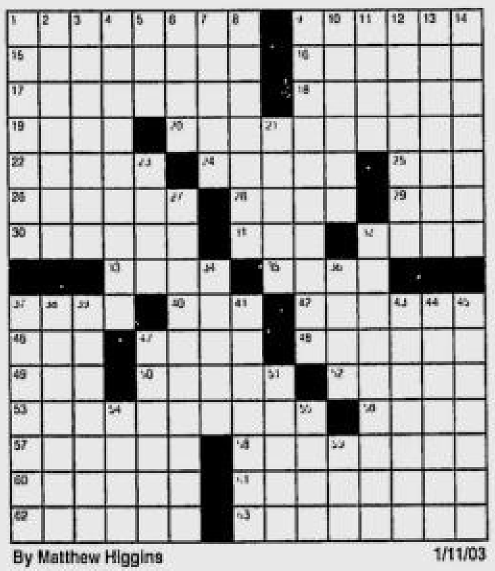
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Extravagance is likely to lead to worry and anxiety. Don't spend money to impress someone. Use your wit, charm and creative imagination to attract attention.

Birthday Baby: You will not stand around waiting for things to happen, but instead you will be the instigator. You will take your chances and be willing to suffer the consequences if need be. You will always stand by your convictions.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Lender
9 Lion groups
15 Tradition
16 Louisiana border river
17 Female monsters
18 Like an opera song
19 Buttocks
20 Tunable percussion instrument
22 Father of an aristo
24 Court doings
25 __ longa, vita brevis
26 Newspaper boss
28 Units of poetic rhythm
29 Convened
30 Repeat from memory
31 Evergreen
32 El __, TX
33 Designer Chanel
35 Close by, old-style
37 Building wings
40 Lode's yield
42 Constructs
46 __ of Cortez
47 Credit-card comp.
48 Leon lady
49 Coupe or sedan
50 Ruin
52 Interlaced
53 Not evaluated
56 Honey drink
57 Lower in dignity
58 Eau de __
60 Husband of Isis
61 Stage-manage
62 Addison's partner
63 Despicable cowards

DOWN
1 Whirlybird
2 Assign a different mark
3 Having no fixed direction
4 Science of nutritional planning
5 "__ a Wonderful Life"
6 Piece of work
7 Curved moldings
8 Cram full again
9 Ancient stringed instruments
10 Most uncommon
11 Footnote wd.
12 Museum's natural setting display
13 Makes certain
14 For all appearances
21 Link
23 Sun. newspaper section, once
27 Amends made
32 Marvels
34 Sandwich cookies
36 Developed
37 Lisbon loot
38 Most rangy
39 Wyoming city
41 Were
43 Certain Commandment breaker
44 Picked up the tab
45 Actor George
47 Set upon violently
51 Hotelier Helmsley
54 Withered
55 Lodgings in Liverpool
59 Set afire


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63

By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

1/11/03

Friday's Puzzle Solved

A	B	B	A	■	O	M	A	S	A	■	C	C	C	P
X	R	A	Y	■	B	A	N	T	U	■	R	H	E	E
L	O	N	E	R	A	N	G	E	R	■	A	L	D	O
E	N	D	■	E	N	O	L	■	O	H	I	O	A	N
S	C	A	R	F	■	R	O	Y	R	O	G	E	R	S
■	■	■	U	S	E	■	■	U	A	E	■	■	■	■
O	M	A	R	■	M	I	S	C	■	R	A	Y	O	N
H	O	P	A	L	O	N	G	C	A	S	S	I	D	Y
S	W	A	L	E	■	A	D	A	M	■	S	P	F	F
■	■	■	■	M	A	P	■	■	U	T	A	■	■	■
G	E	N	E	A	U	T	R	Y	■	H	Y	S	O	N
A	G	E	I	N	G	■	A	A	A	A	■	U	R	I
P	E	P	E	■	H	O	O	T	G	I	B	S	O	N
E	S	A	I	■	T	R	U	E	R	■	I	A	N	E
S	T	L	O	■	S	A	L	S	A	■	U	N	O	S

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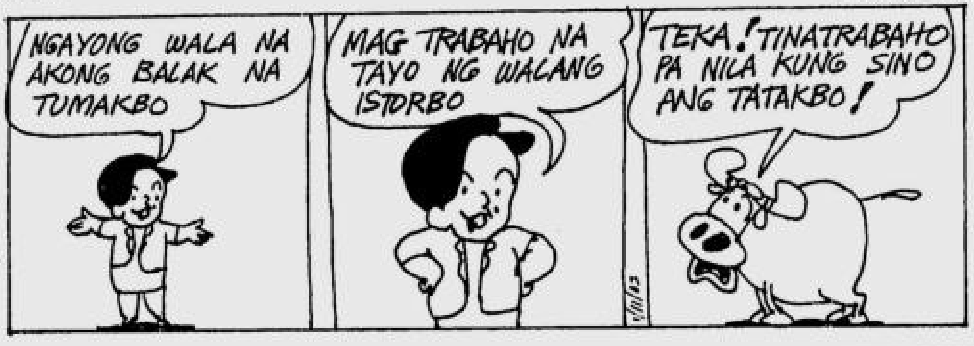
1/11/03

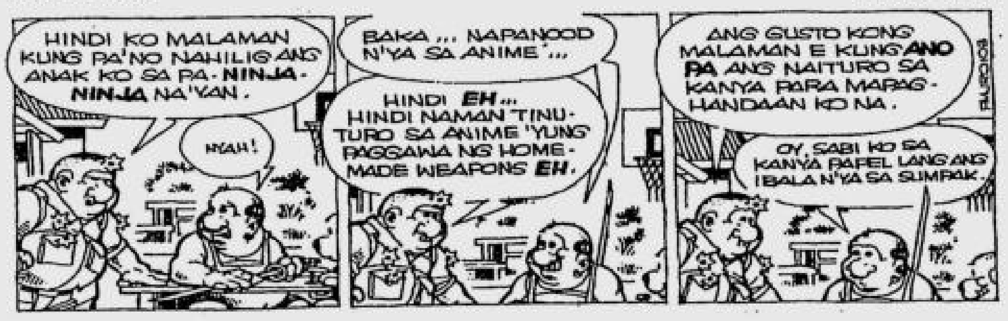
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NGAYONG WALA NA AKONG BALAK NA TUMAKBO
MAG TRABAHO NA TAYO NG WALANG ISTORBO
TEKA! TINATRABAHO PA NILA KUNG SINO ANG TATAKBO!
1/11/03

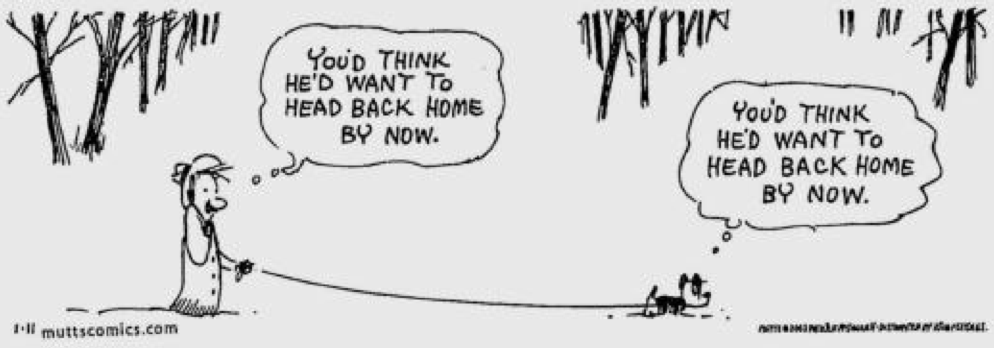
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HINDI KO MALAMAN KUNG PA'NO NAHILIG ANG ANAK KO SA PA-NINJA-NINJA NA'YAN.
NYAH!
BAKA... NAPANOOD N'YA SA ANIME...
HINDI EH... HINDI NAMAN TINUTURO SA ANIME 'YUNG PAGGAWA NG HOME-MADE WEAPONS EH.
ANG GUSTO KONG MALAMAN E KUNG ANO PA ANG NAITURO SA KANYA PARA MAPAGHANDAAN KO NA.
OY, SABI KO SA KANYA PAPEL LANG ANG IBALA N'YA SA SUMPAK.

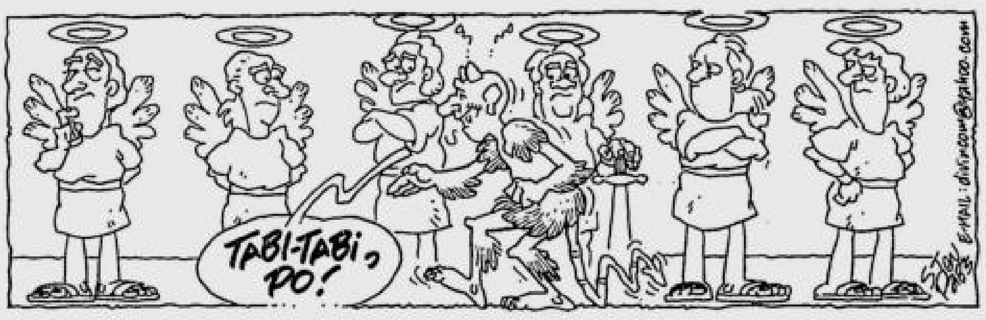
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOU'D THINK HE'D WANT TO HEAD BACK HOME BY NOW.
YOU'D THINK HE'D WANT TO HEAD BACK HOME BY NOW.
1-11 muttscomics.com

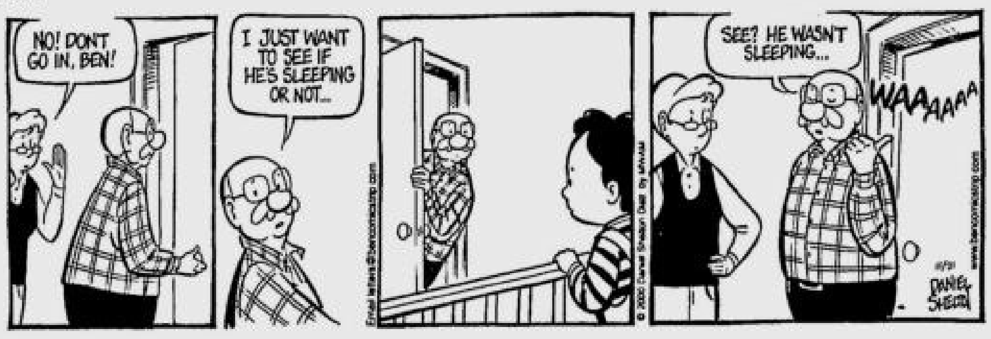
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TABI-TABI, PO!

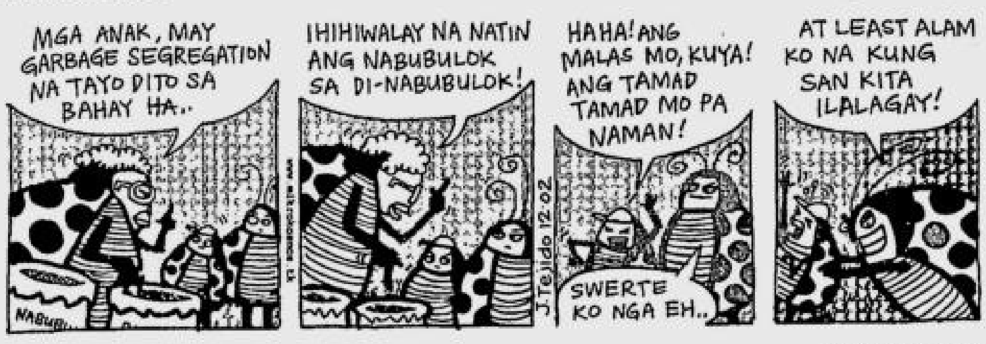
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NO! DON'T GO IN, BEN!
I JUST WANT TO SEE IF HE'S SLEEPING OR NOT...
SEE? HE WASN'T SLEEPING...
WAAAAAAA

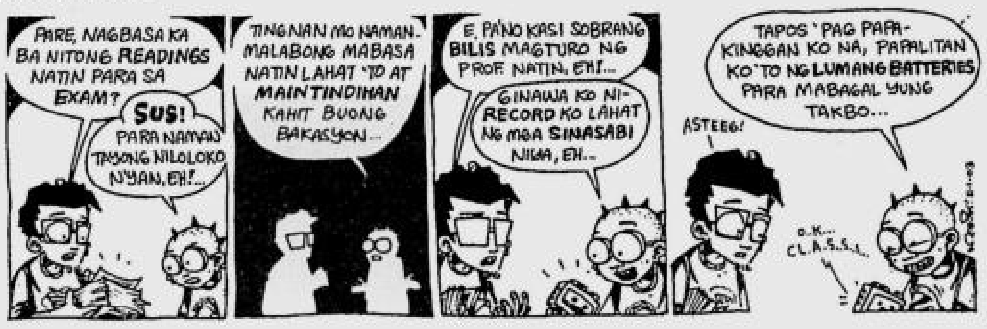
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MGA ANAK, MAY GARBAGE SEGREGATION NA TAYO DITO SA BAHAY HA..
NABUBU...
IHIHIWALAY NA NATIN ANG NABUBULOK SA DI-NABUBULOK!
HAHA! ANG MALAS MO, KUYA! ANG TAMAD TAMAD MO PA NAMAN!
SWERTE KO NGA EH..
AT LEAST ALAM KO NA KUNG SAN KITA ILALAGAY!
J. Tejido 12.02

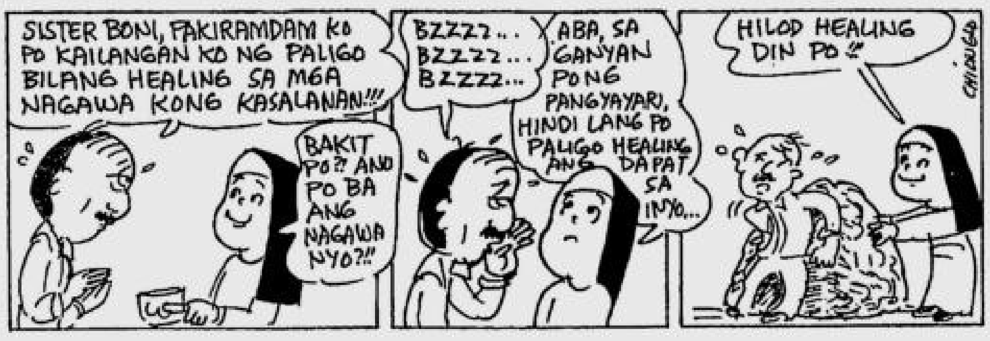
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


PARE, NAGBASA KA BA NITONG READINGS NATIN PARA SA EXAM?
SUS! PARA NAMAN TAYONG NILOLOKO NYAN, EH!...
TINGNAN MO NAMAN. MALABONG MABASA NATIN LAHAT 'TO AT MAINTINDIHAN KAHIT BUONG BAKASYON...
E, PA'NO KASI SOBRANG BILIS MAGTURO NG PROF NATIN, EH!...
GINAWA KO NI-RECORD KO LAHAT NG MGA SINASABI NIYA, EH...
ASTEEG!
TAPOS 'PAG PAPAKINGGAN KO NA, PAPALITAN KO 'TO NG LUMANG BATTERIES PARA MABAGAL YUNG TAKBO...
O.K... CL.A.S.S...

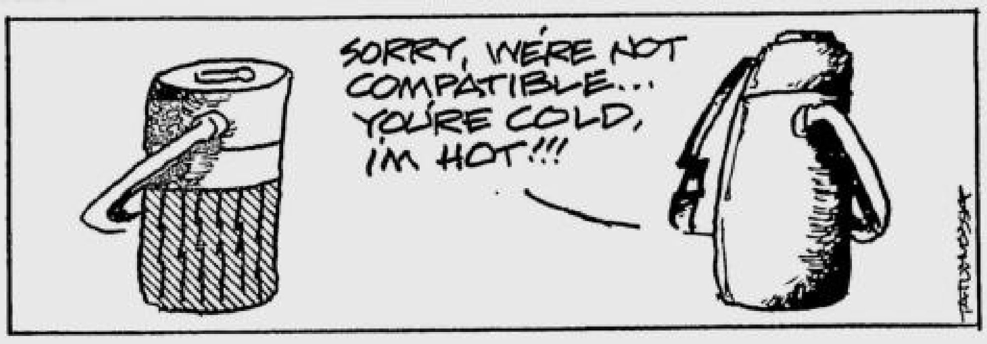
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, PAKIRAMDAM KO PO KAILANGAN KO NG PALIGO BILANG HEALING SA MGA NAGAWA KONG KASALANAN!!!
BAKIT PO?! ANO PO BA ANG NAGAWA NYO?!
BZZZZ... BZZZZ... BZZZZ...
ABA, SA GANYAN PONG PANGYAYARI, HINDI LANG PO PALIGO HEALING ANG DAPAT SA INYO...
HILOD HEALING DIN PO!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SORRY, WE'RE NOT COMPATIBLE... YOU'RE COLD, I'M HOT!!!

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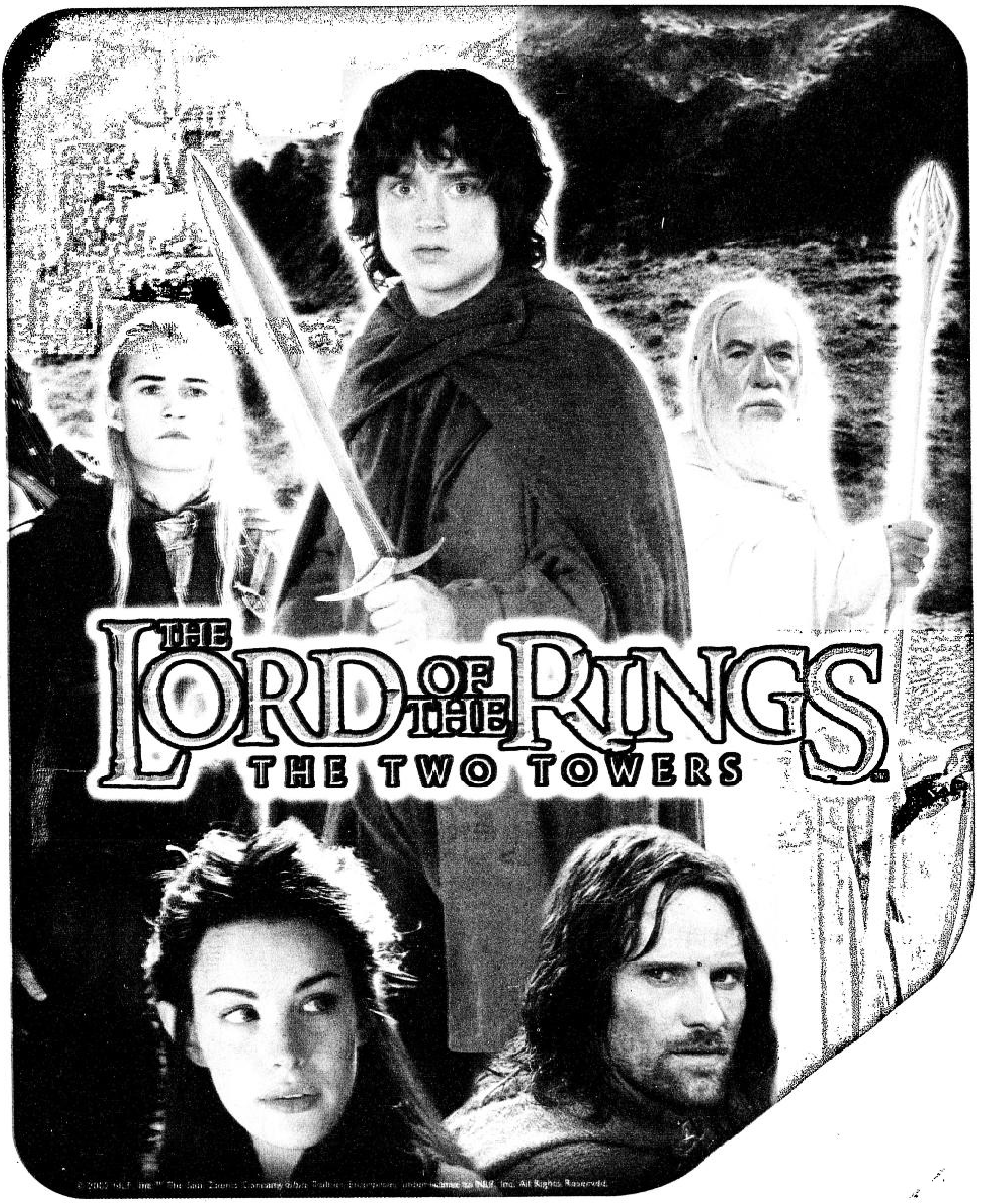
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS

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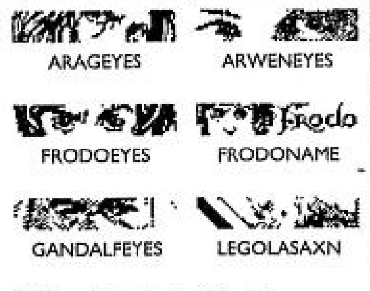
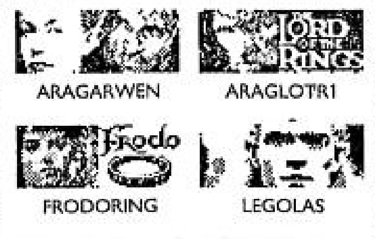

ARAGEYES
ARWENEYES
FRODOEYES
FRODONAME
GANDALFEYES
LEGOLASAXN
LOTRTITLE
NAMEARAGORN
NAMEARWEN
NAMELEGOLAS

PICTURE MESSAGES


ARAGARWEN
ARAGLOTR1
FRODORING
LEGOLAS
LOTRARWEN
LOTRLOGO
LOTRRING
RINGSYMBOL

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Group Graphics*	**GROUP LOTR**
Picture Messages*	**PIC LOTR**
Screen Savers*	**SAVER LOTR**

Send all keywords to 239.

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To get a list of images available for Ericsson and Siemens handsets, key in LOTR and send to 239.

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Junior INQUIRER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2003 ✦ 12 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 7, NUMBER 15

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

Doggie Gas Mask Page 2
Loving Mom Page 5
Kuwento:
Kamusta Ka! Page 6
The Lunch Box Page 11

The Dream Team

Two years ago, these kids dreamed big dreams. JI staff writer Eline Santos visits the Millennium Dreamers to see what they have been up to. Have all their dreams come true?

DREAMS can come true. These kids are proof!

Eleven of the original 16 Millennium Dreamers got together for a reunion last December 21.

The last time they were together was in May 2000 when they received the Millennium Dreamer's Award given by the Walt Disney Company, McDonalds Corporation and the UNESCO in Disney World, Florida. The award was given to honor children from around the world who have made a positive impact on their community.

Before their trip, the group

The Dream/ p. 4

KIM, Ivan, Carl and Diega share their stories two years after their Disney trip.

JOHNNY VILLENA

PEACE is happines

IS this a scene from the hippie 60s? Grade 3 students of St. Scholastica cheer for peace at their annual Peace Camp. See story on page 10.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

World Scope

Tel Aviv, Israel
Tokyo, Japan
Maryland, USA
Hainan Province, China

Buffy, say 'thank you.'
Meoww-welcome.
Purr!

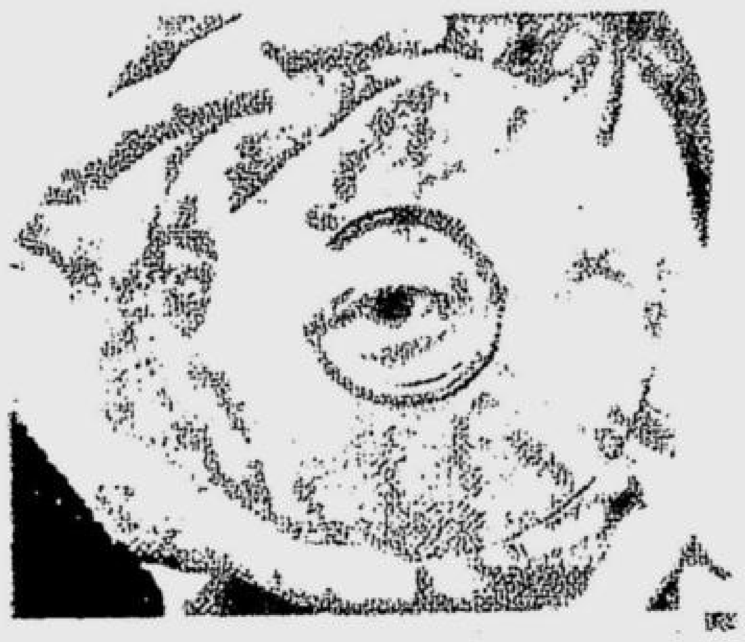
Buffy & the Tumor Slayer

DOCTOR Bill Bush, right, smiles as Lenore Gelb, holds her cat Buffy at Bush's animal hospital in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Bush performed surgery to remove a tumor from Buffy's head. Buffy's cat scan can be seen in the background. *AP*

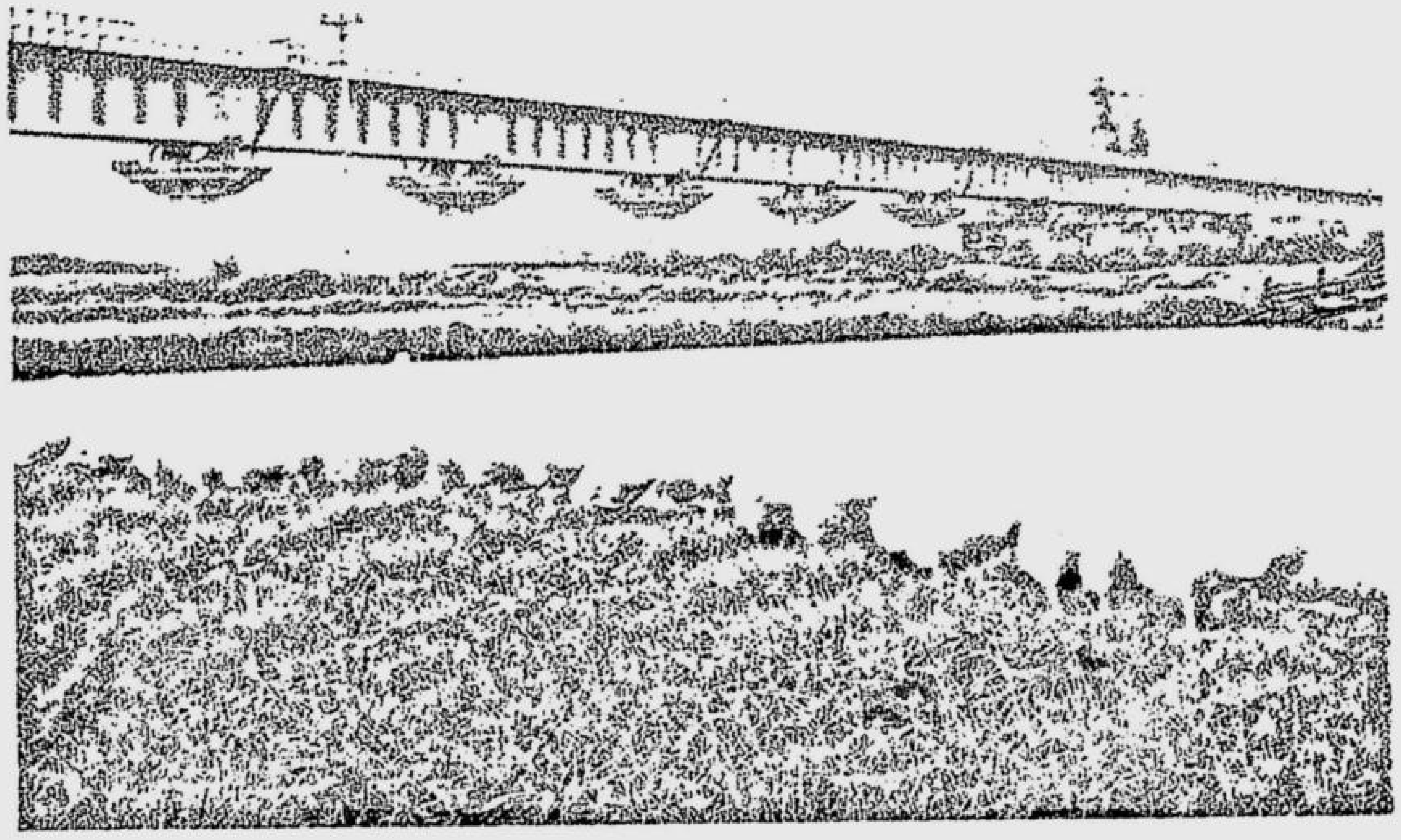
Caution for Canines

ISRAELI veterinarian Dr. Rafi Kishon tries a gas mask on the dog Zina in Tel Aviv. Israeli pets can breathe easier with the knowledge that Kishon gas masks will protect them from a biological or chemical weapons attack should Iraq fire non-conventional missiles at the Jewish state. *Reuters*

I C U!

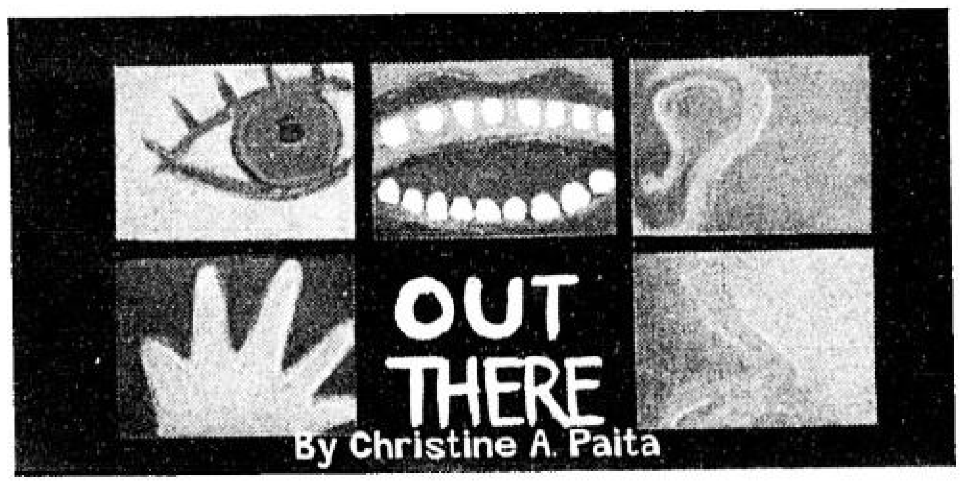


THE C-Thru disc is said to be the world's first translucent compact disc. It uses silver instead of aluminum and the thickness of the sputtering layer is only 28 microns, which enables the disc to be translucent but with a reflection similar to the effect of using aluminum. DT Japan Inc. will begin selling the C-thru Disc this month. *Reuters*



Something to Quack About

A GROUP of ducks walk placidly beside the Guangdong-Hainan Railway near Haikou, capital of south China's Hainan Province. Little do they know that their hang-out will soon be a busier place. The railway linking Zhanjiang in Guangdong Province and Sanya in Hainan Province will be put into operation early this year. The operation of the railway will greatly promote the economic development of Hainan Province, China's largest special economic zone. *AP*



By Christine A. Paita

Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax number is 897-4794. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Event

COOKING DEMO. Powerbooks invites kids to its Power events this January. Come to the Kiddie Cooking Demo on Jan. 18 at Powerbooks Alabang Town Center at 2 p.m. On Jan. 25, there will be a Children's Activity Day and POWERKIDS Launch at 2 p.m. All activities are for free.

Workshop

ARTS WORKSHOP. Kids@Play Center for Arts and Development offers workshops for kids in **theater, dance, and visual arts.** The workshops are held every Saturday, from 10 a.m to 12 noon for ballet and visual arts, and 1-3 p.m. for theater. Kids@Play also offers Early Learning Education to children with theater as its significant medium. Visit Kids@Play at the 3rd Flr., Unit 301 West East Center, 1336 Taft Ave. corner Padre Faura, Manila. For more info, call 404-1256.

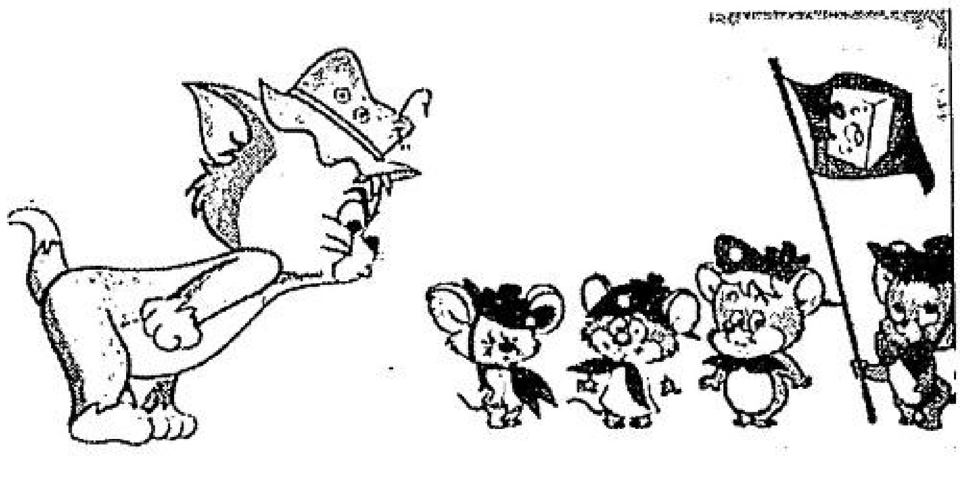
Contest

CALLING ALL ARTISTS. The Philippine Board on Books for Young People is now accepting entries for the **2003 PBBY-Alcala Illustrators' Prize.** Entries must be based on the winning story "Sandosenang Kuya" by Russell Molina. Send entries to the PBBY Secretariat, c/o Adarna House, Room 201, JGS Bldg., 30 Scout Tuason St., Quezon City. All entries must be received by the PBBY Secretariat not later than 5 p.m., Friday, Jan. 31, 2003. For more info, please call PBBY at 372-3548, send fax to 372-4204 or e-mail to pbby@adarna.com.ph addressed to the PBBY Secretariat. Look for Dencel.

Stuff

LATEST W.I.T.C.H ISSUE. The January-February issue of W.I.T.C.H. magazine is now out. In this issue, Cornelia travels to Meridian without Will, Irma, Taranee and Hay Lin. She then discovers something about her old friend Elyon and meets the boy of her dreams! Get your copy of W.I.T.C.H. at magazine stands and bookstores nationwide. For subscription inquiries, call 526-1082 or 536-7450 for Metro Manila, (032) 412-3366 to 67 for Visayas, and (082) 224-5818 or (082) 221-6227 for Mindanao.

K-ZONE'S COMIC BOOK SPECIAL. The latest issue of K-Zone magazine gives kids the scoop on the comic book. Comic book artists reveal what it takes to create comic book characters, and there's also stuff about what happens when comic book action is shifted to the big screen. Enjoy colorful pages of cool trivia about your fave Tolkien characters Frodo, Gandalf, and Legolas; Draco Malfoy, the Justice League, X-Men and Digimon; and games, jokes, and comic strips. K-Zone is available at magazine stands and bookstores nationwide.



TOM and Jerry Kids

Cable Pick

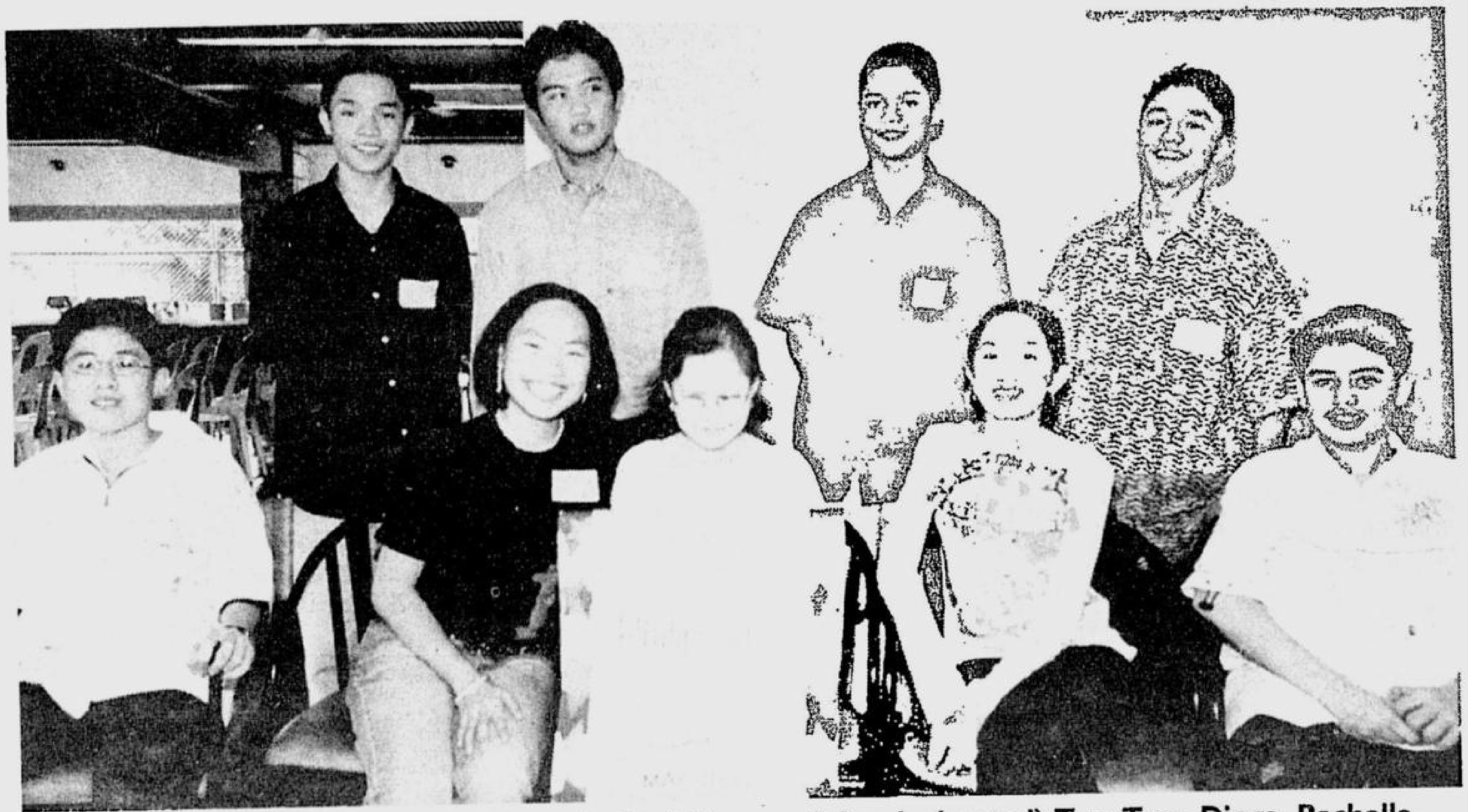
TINY TV. Starting Jan. 27, preschool kids can now have two hours of cartoony fun with Cartoon Network's "Tiny TV." "Tiny TV" will feature the most adorable and beloved children's characters such as **Dink, the Dinosaur, Paws Paws, the Flintstones Kids, A Pup named Scooby-Doo** and **Tom and Jerry Kids.** The cartoon show airs Mondays to Fridays from 9 to 11 a.m.

"THE Two Towers," the long-awaited and suspenseful sequel to "The Fellowship of the Ring," opens in cinemas today. Elijah Wood as Frodo Baggins continues his perilous trek to Mordor with faithful Sam and treacherous Gollum.

REUTERS

The Dream Team

(from page 1)



DREAMERS REUNITE. (Standing) Joseph, Carl, Raymond, Jacob, (seated) Tum-Tum, Diega, Rachelle, Kim, and Ivan.

JOHNNY VILLENA

shared some of their stories and dreams with Junior Inquirer (April 29, 2000 issue).

Reaching Out

Diega Villanueva wanted to make her mark as a student leader back then.

Now a junior high school student at Elizabeth Seton School, Diega is the vice president of the student council. She's also taken leadership roles in the Junior Catholic Women's League, Parish Youth Council, and the Junior Zonta Club.

"So many things happened at the summit that when I came back, they saw a different Diega. It was an improved Diega because being there and communicating with so many people who did a lot of good things to help others... it motivated me."

One project Diega remembers is telling stories to kids from depressed areas. "It's very fulfilling."

Fifteen-year-old Carl Erick Ramores encourages others to take up sports. A track and field athlete, Carl is a junior at Polangoi General Comprehensive High School in Bicol.

Grady Leonard Aggabao, 14, likes to teach kids how to play basketball and help others in need.

"A man who needed a gallstone operation approached me to ask if they could borrow money," Grady relates. "My friends and I gave him the money instead of lending it. We paid for the man's operation, his cousins paid for the medicine."

A second year high school student at Lyceum of Tuao, Cagayan Valley, Grady is grateful for the opportunity to help. "I just hope I will remain the same and grow up as a helpful person."

Music Dreams

"One of my dreams was to win the NAMCYA and I did," says Ivan Anthony Buguet. In 2001, Ivan won first place in piano at the National Music Competitions for Young Artists.

Ivan, 13, hopes to finish his bachelor's degree in music from the University of Sto. Tomas soon. "I'm second year high school academically," explains the student of Angelicum College. "But I'm second year college in piano."

Karlyne Kim Kwok, a junior at St. Theresa's College, fulfilled her NAMCYA dream too. "I won first place in the solo voice category B last December." With her sweet soprano voice, Kim took home the honor by singing classical songs "Sa Kabukiran," "Araw-araw sa Maynila," and "Rejoice O Daughter of Zion."

Jeric Enrico Villaruz, a fifth grader at Claret School, likes to sing as well while fellow dreamer Rachelle Pilares likes to play the piano.

Rachelle, 15, is a junior at the Philippine National School for the Blind. She lost her eyesight at the age of five.

So how does Rachelle learn her music? "My teacher will dictate the notes... then I will memorize it. Then I will play it."

"I want to go to Disney again and I want to prove to people that the blind youth have a role in helping others," she shares. "All youths all over the world can help to make the world better for a better tomorrow."

Harmony of Helping

Thirstan "Tum-tum" Mendoza is doing just that with his music.

Tum-tum, 13, was diagnosed with autism when he was 2 1/2. Born with perfect pitch, he has been playing the marimba since he was 5 years old and by the age of 10 had given over a hundred performances.

Tum-tum contributes his talent and time to raise funds for the Autism Society of the Philippines and other organizations for the disabled. Last March, he was awarded the Rosemary Kennedy International Young Soloist Award.

The Sarreal brothers are another musically-gifted lot who share their talent with others. John Raymond, Jacob Gabriel and Joseph Gideon Sarreal play with the rest of their siblings to form the Sarreal Wind Ensemble.

Raymond, 16, plays the flute. Joseph, 15, plays the trumpet and Jacob, 14, plays the oboe, the alto and soprano saxophone.

"We held a benefit concert where we ask for old clothes instead of money," says Joseph. "We then gave the clothes to the refugees in Basilan."

"We donate our savings—the money that we collect after our concerts—to Children's Hour," adds Raymond.

Hope for the Future

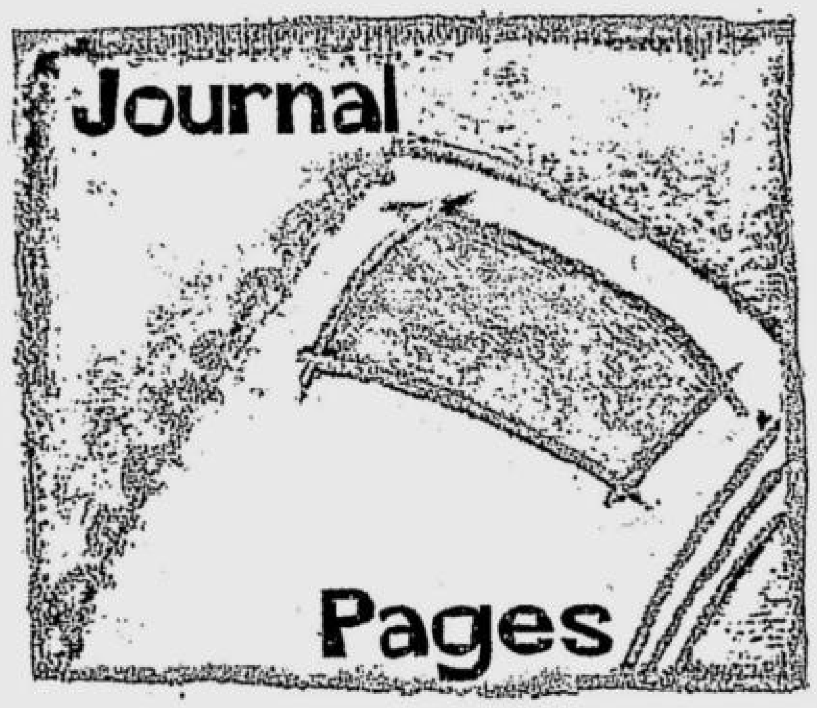
Tum-tum states his hopes for the coming year quite simply: "That I will study harder and accomplish more stuff."

Working hard seems to be a mantra for these young achievers.

"If you work hard for what you want you're sure to get it," agrees Joseph.

"And to pray hard for it too," adds Kim. "Because without God, nothing will really come out from what you're doing."

Raymond wants "to build a charity for the poor, even though I know it's very impossible to do but hopefully the Lord will grant me this wish. Maybe in five or ten years."



Ang Mapagmahal na Ina

Ni Sarena A. Guevarra
Countryside Village, Pasig

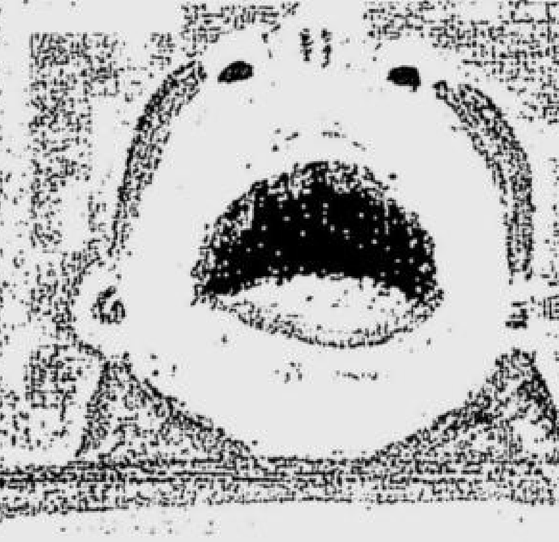
ANG aking nanay ay mapagmahal, mabait, matalino at matulungin. Tinutulungan niya ako sa paggawa ng mga takdang aralin. Pag birthday ko, sinusorpresa niya ako ng paborito kong regalo. Matiyaga siyang magalaga pag may sakit ako at gagawin niya lahat para gumaling lang ako. Parati niya akong kinukumusta sa telepono kung siya ay nasa trabaho. Minsan, pagkagaling niya sa trabaho, ay papasalubungan niya kaming magkakapatid ng mga masasarap na pagkain. Pinapakain niya kami ng masusustansyang pagkain para maging malakas at malusog. Minsan sa kanya ko sinasabi ang mga problema tungkol sa mga kaibigan ko at tinutulungan niya ako sa pamamagitan ng mga pangaral at tamang solusyon sa problema. Higit sa lahat palagi niya akong tinuturuang magdasal.

Minsan naman ay nagagalit siya sa akin kasi makulit ako at hindi ko ginagawa ang mga iniuutos niya. Okey lang naman kasi para matuto ako ng tamang gawain.

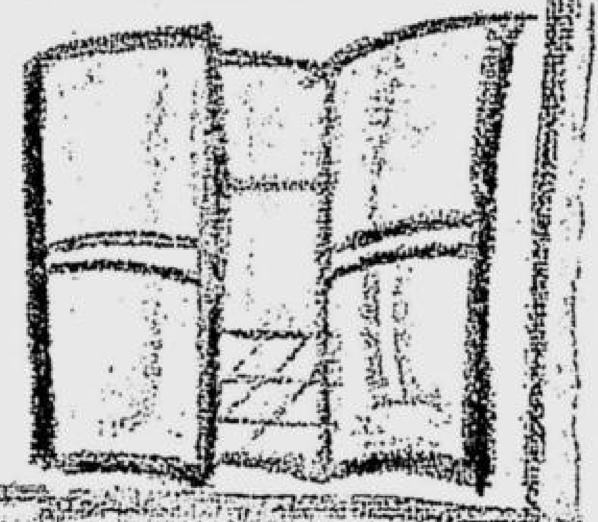
Ganyan ang pagmamahal ng mga nanay, hindi kayang pantayan. Mahal na mahal ko rin siya at hindi ko siya maipagpapalit kahit kanino.

Sound Familiar ?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



An Open Letter to Stanly Galo S. Sy

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I know all people have their own opinion but I just want to say that I disagree of moving "Saiyuki"'s airing time. I think Monday-Friday is really good.

I want to watch it on weekdays because it gets shown five days. But we'll only see it twice if it is shown on a weekend.

The violence on "Saiyuki" isn't really that bad...I do admit that I want to be Genjo Sanzo and Son Goku but that's completely harmless!

Just because my classmates and I like the show doesn't mean we're going to hurt people.

Also, I haven't neglected my studies just because I watch the show. I'm a 91.4 average third honor student. That proves that "Saiyuki" doesn't affect my grades.

—**RACHEL OLIVEROS**, 11, International Christian Academy, West Greenhills, San Juan

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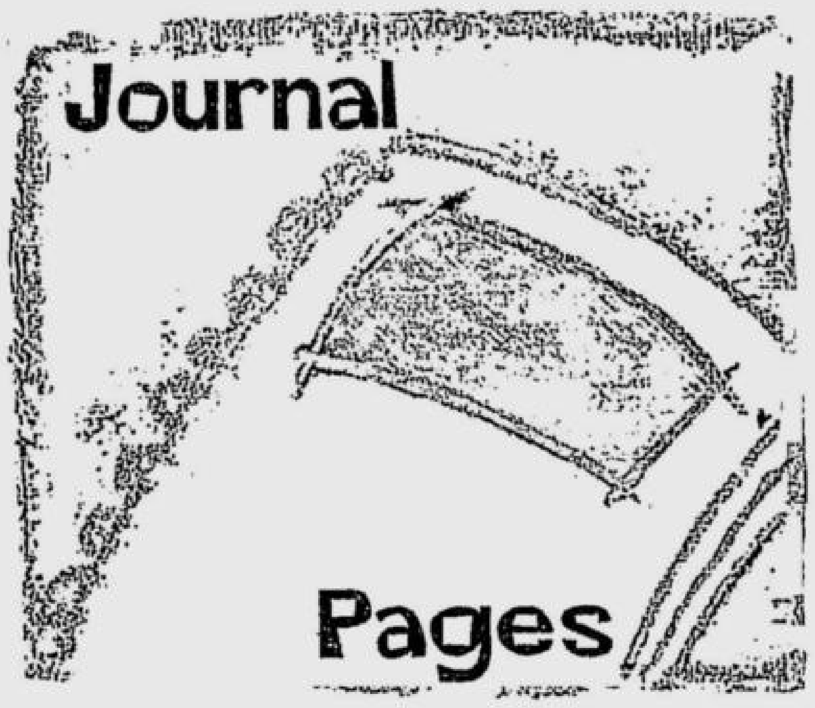

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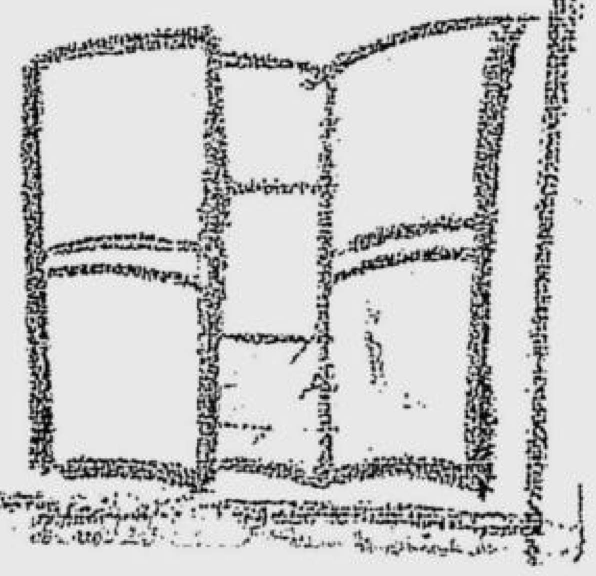

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FOR or By KIDS

Kamusta ka!

May mahiyaing pinsan si Emil. Paano kaya niya mapapalakas ang loob ng taga-Mindorong si Masoy?

Kuwento ni Lem Garcellano
Guhit ni Lyra Garcellano

BAGONG lipat lang sa amin itong si Masoy. Pinsan ko siyang taga-Mindoro. Napunta dito sa Maynila dahil dito na siya pinag-aaral ng Tiyo Efren at Tiya Noriet ko. Mas mabuti raw dito dahil maganda raw ang turo sa eskuwela. Kaya ang saya-saya ko naman dahil me barkada na ako sa iskul namin.

"E...e...e...Emil...parang ayaw ko yatang pumasok..."

Patay kang bata ka! Ipinagmamalaki ko pa naman sa mga kaklase ko, dahil sabi ko me pinsan akong matalino at kaklase ko pa. Tapos hindi papasok! Muntik ko nang sakalin sa tuwa itong pinsan ko e pero hindi ko ginawa dahil masama iyon di ba?

"E...e...e...Emil...kasi...kasi...nahihiya ako, e."

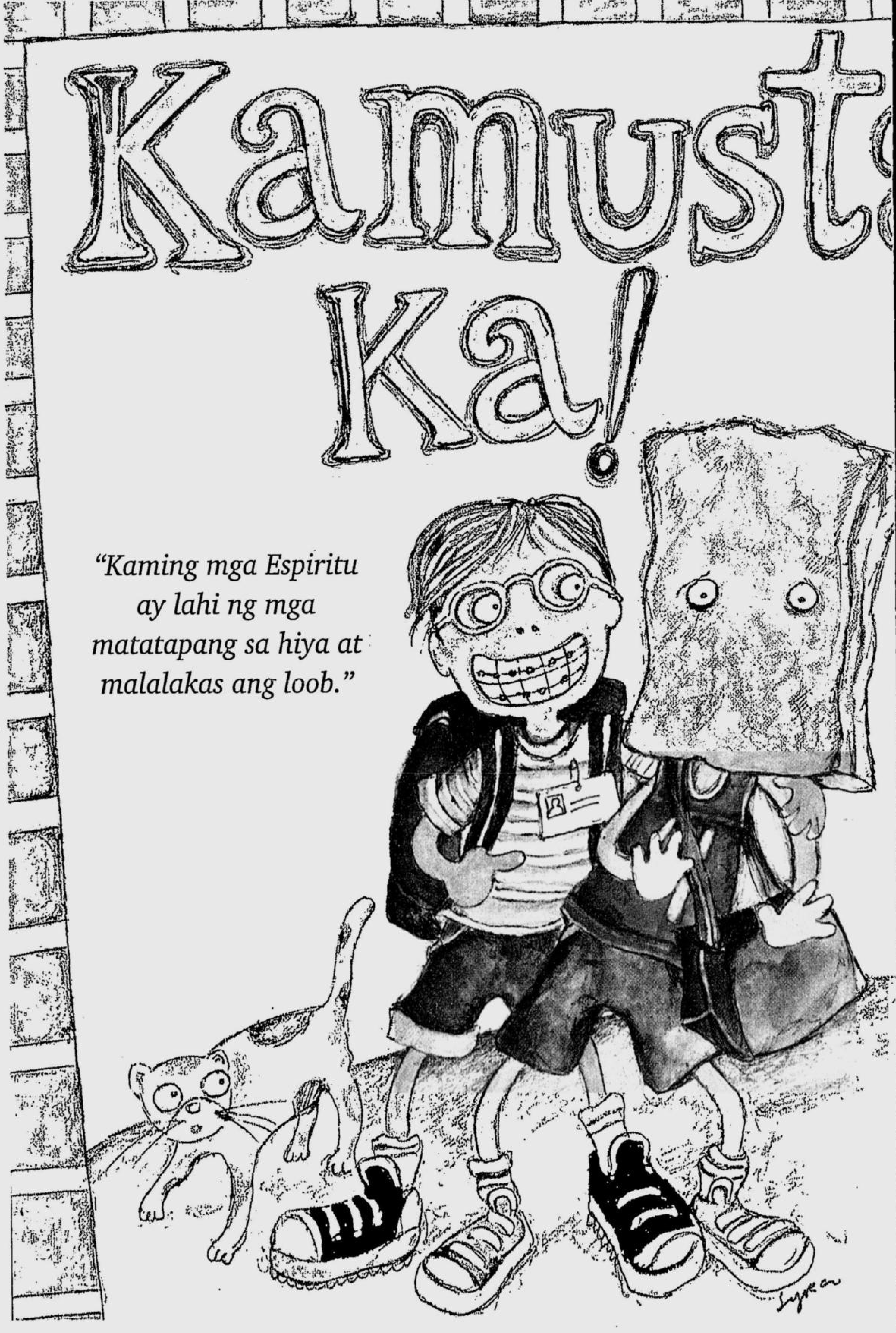
Nahihiya! Palagay ko hindi ko pinsan ito. Sa pagkakaalam ko, lahat kaming magkaka-maganak e matatapang at malalakas.

Tama. Kaming mga Espiritu ay lahi ng mga matatapang sa hiya at malalakas ang loob. At bakit naman kami mahihiya sa ibang tao e pare-pareho naman kaming tao, hindi ba? Pag meron kaming hindi kakilala, nagpapakilala kami!

"Kamusta ka. Ako si Emil."

Simple lang. Kailangang makipagkilala lalo na kung kaklase namin o kaya kapitbahay o kaibigan ng kaibigan ng kaibigan namin.

KANINO kaya nagmana itong si Masoy?



"Kaming mga Espiritu ay lahi ng mga matatapang sa hiya at malalakas ang loob."

Pogi naman, tulad ko. Matangkad naman, matangkad nga lang nang kaunti sa akin. A oo! Alam ko na—nagmana sa Tiyo Efren ko na ermitanyo na laging nasa loob ng talyer at nagkukutingting ng makina ng jeepney.

"A basta, Masoy. Hinding-hinding-hinding-hinding-hindi pwede na hindi ka papasok sa pasukan. Ngayon pa man, ipakikilala na kita sa lahat ng kapitbahay natin. Halika!"

Ang ginawa ko hinawakan ko siya ng dalawang kamay sa braso tapos hinatak ko talaga sa kapitbahay naming si Ning-ing.

Habang hinahatak ko siya umusok sa alikabok yung kalye namin dahil sa friction ng paa niya sa lupa. Hindi ko rin napilit kahit ang ganda-ganda ni Nining. Torpe.

Makikipagkaibigan lang hindi pa marunong.

"E sa mahiyain ako e. Ano'ng problema mo?"

Iyon ang laging katuwiran hanggang pasukan. Nakahanda na lahat ang gamit namin para sa pagpasok. Aalis na kami at hinanap ko si Masoy. Pinuntahan ko siya sa kwarto pero...wala si Masoy!!!

Hinanap ko sa ilalim ng kama—wala! Hinanap ko sa likod ng kurtina—wala! Tinanaw ko sa labas ng bintana (bubungan na kasi ang labas ng bintana namin e)—wala rin!

"Nawawala si Masoy!"

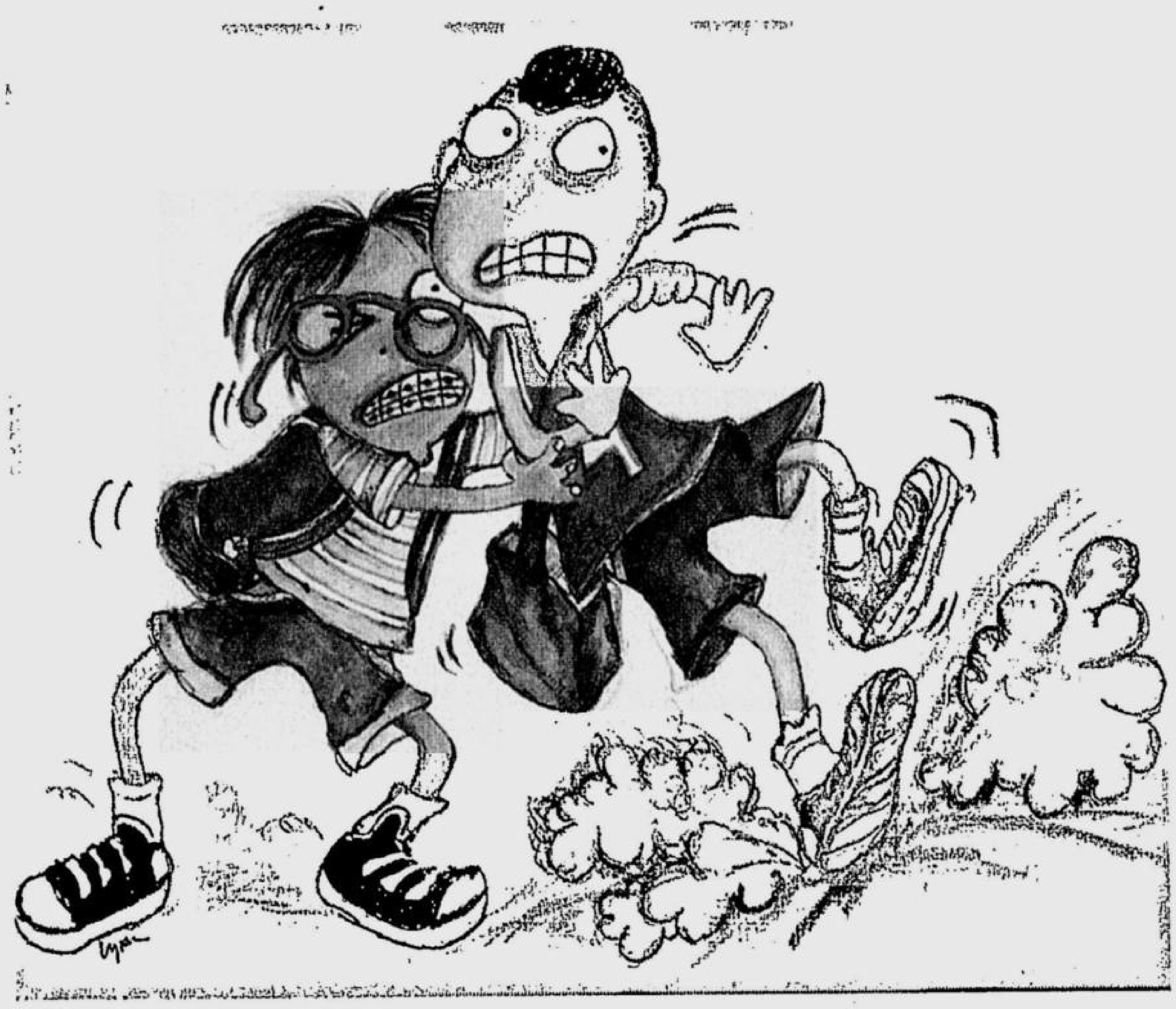
NAGKAGULO na po sa buong bahay namin. Nag-long-distance na si Nanay sa Mindoro—wala roon. Nag-report na sa pulis si tatay. Nag-imbistiga ako, baka sakaling nagtago sa bahay nina Nin-ing—wala.

Tapos narinig namin ang malakas na sigaw ni Puring, yung katulong namin:

"Eeeeheeeek! Sa aparador! Me tao! Eeeeeeekk!"

Sino pa kundi si Masoy.

Nakasiksik sa likod ng mga damit. Sa madaling sabi, naipaliwanag na ang lahat. Tapos, hinatak ko na siya papasok sa eskuwela namin. Tulad ng dati, umuusok sa friction ang kalsada. Halos maubos ang swelas ng sapatos ni Masoy.



Sa iskul namin, ganito ang nangyari: napadaan kami sa mga kaibigan kong naglalaro ng basketbol. Alam kong hindi siya makikipagkilala kahit pilitin ko kaya ako na lang. Yun pala...

"Ayyy. Basketbol!"

Basketbol! Ayun! Pakiramdam ko gustong sumali pero...hindi ko siya tutulungan. Bakit kamo? Aba, dapat siya ang gumawa ng paraan, di ba?

Alam ninyo? Walang nangyari. Lumipas ang maghapon at mga araw hindi nakapaglaro at hindi nakipagkilala si Masoy. Bahala siya. Dumaan ang ilang linggo...

"E...e...e...Emil...nalulungkot ako e..."

KITA NA niya. Mahirap ang walang kaibigan. Malungkot. E di makipagkaibigan siya. Simple lang. Kilala ko sila, hindi siya hihiyain nun. Ang gawin niya, lapitan sila, sabihin lang na gustong makipagkilala, sabihin ang pangalan tapos kamayan. Tapos. Kung gusto nilang makipagkilala, ayos. Kung hindi, e di hindi bale. Kaya...

"Kamusta ka. Ako si Masoy!"

Ayos! Ngayon si Masoy ang pinakapopular sa iskul namin dahil bukod sa magaling magbasketbol, matalino pa sa klase.

Sa bahay, walang tigil sa pagkukuwento tungkol sa mga kaibigan niya. Tuwang-tuwa din ako dahil sikat na nga ako sa iskul dahil medyo magaling din tayo sa basketbol at medyo matalino din tayo, pinsan ko pa si Masoy.

Kasi nga madali lang makipagkaibigan e.

*Si **Lem** ay ang producer, director at writer ng "Alikabuk," "Karen's World," "Solved!" at "Why!," mga programang pambata ng "Eskwela ng Bayan." At saka, pamangkin nga pala niya si Lyra, "ang magaling na ilustrador ng maikling-maikling kwentong ito."*

*Si **Lyra** ay miyembro ng Ilustrador ng Kabataan (Ang InK).*

Jabez the Free Spirit

By Margaux Ortiz

THE first thing you'll notice about Jabez Manzanilla is her smile. One look at her and you know she's a person everybody wants to be friends with.

"I just love to kid and joke around," says Jabez, a 6th grader at Miriam College Grade School in Quezon City. "That way the people around me forget their worries and just laugh with me."

The 12-year-old shares that she used this "technique" when she was appointed to the position of conductor in one of their class' most important activities this year.

"I was chosen to lead the class in the 'Sabayang Bigkas' competition," relates Jabez. The contest was participated in by all the Grade 6 sections in their school.

NO fence can keep friendly Jabez in for long. JOAN BONDOC

Class Leader

Jabez was a little apprehensive to accept the responsibility at first. "As in any activity that involves uniting people with different personalities, I found my role as a conductor a very daunting task," she says.

But it was not long before her classmates cooperated with her and listened to what she said.

"I'm not even a class officer so I haven't had any previous experience with disciplining my classmates," grins the 6th grader. "They listened to me because I made them laugh."

Jabez believes that enjoying the activity was much more important than winning. However, she says they still felt ecstatic when they won 2nd place in the contest.

"We didn't expect to win," she says. "The other class (that won first place) was really good. I'm glad that we were recognized the second best group when all we aimed to do was have a great time with the activity."

Seize the day!

In her free time, Jabez says she does nothing in particular. "This means there's nothing in particular that I want to do. When I feel like doing something, I do it," she clarifies.

When Jabez feels like singing, she sings. When she feels like swimming, she does it, too. She also plays volleyball, tennis and badminton when she feels outdoorsy.

"I'm not a professional singer or an athlete but you don't have to really excel in something to enjoy it," she says.

Adds Jabez: "As much as possible, do things with other people because it's much more fun that way. And don't forget to put on your friendliest smile."

R U 'RRIFIC?

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rrific' or know someone who is, fill out the the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a

FREE Junior Inquirer & CASIO EMI T-shirt, Plus! a chance to win a Keylighting keyboard!

Kids'r'rrific nomination form

I nominate: ____________________
____
____
Age: ____________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)
____
____
____
____
____
____

She/he lives at ____________________
____
____

and studies at ____________________
____

Her/his contact number is:
____

Sender's Name: ____________________
____

Sender's Age & School: ____________________
____

Sender's Address: ____________________
____

Sender's Contact No.: ____________________
____
____

KEY LIGHTING KEYBOARD
Only from
CASIO

With Hands that Talk

Genalin Marco is not different. She just talks with her hands.

By Astrid Tobias

GROWING up, Genalin Marco thought she was the only deaf child in the whole world. She remembers that she was around seven when she lost her sense of hearing. According to her, she was sick with German measles and it affected her inner ear, making her deaf.

At present, Gen attends regular school. In fact, she is Miriam College's first-ever deaf accounting student.

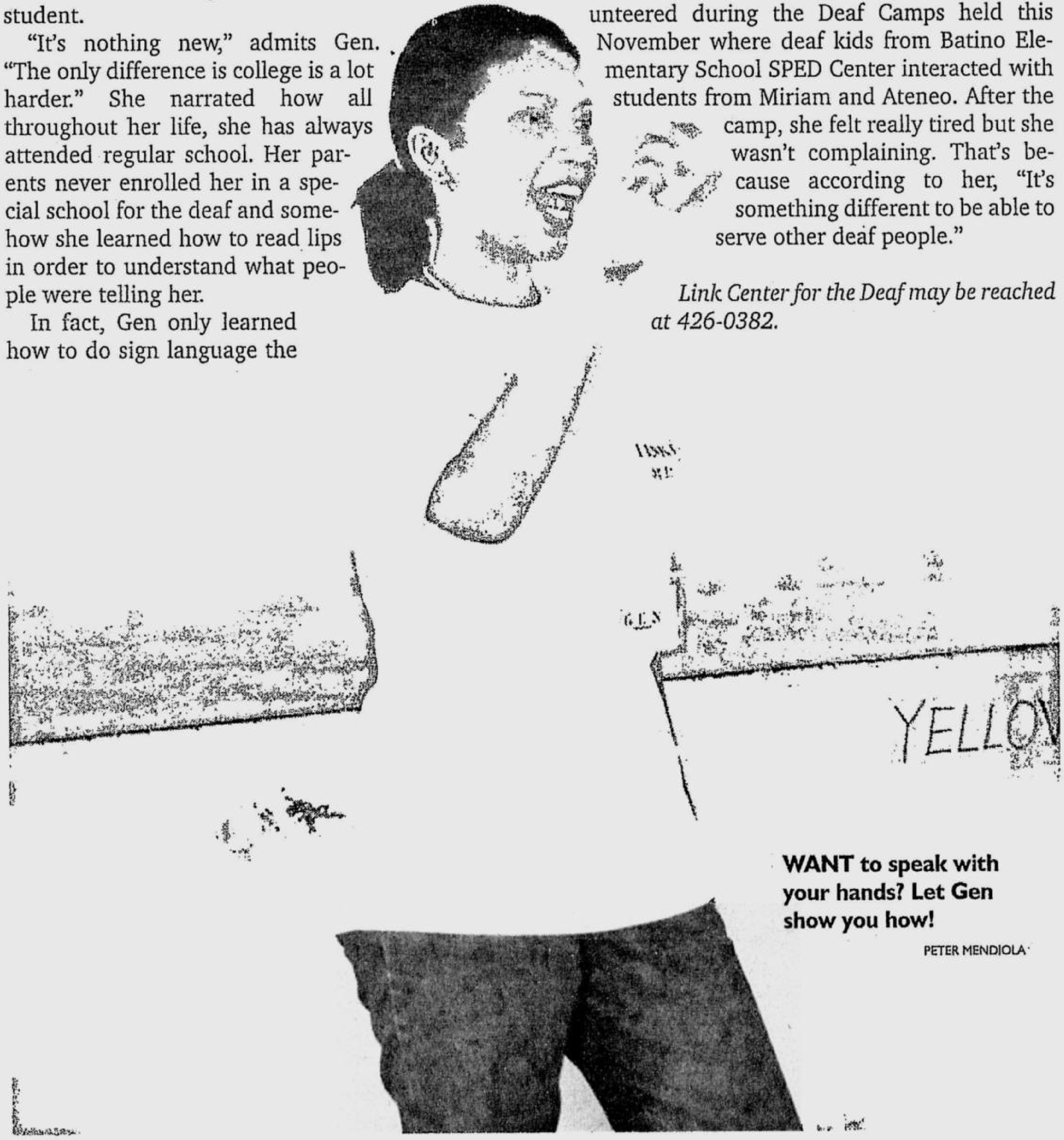
"It's nothing new," admits Gen. "The only difference is college is a lot harder." She narrated how all throughout her life, she has always attended regular school. Her parents never enrolled her in a special school for the deaf and somehow she learned how to read lips in order to understand what people were telling her.

In fact, Gen only learned how to do sign language the summer before she started college.

Now, at 19, Gen has discovered that there are a lot of deaf children just like her. She has also learned that they, too, need a lot of help. That's why she has made a commitment to serve them by being one of the five people behind the Link Center for the Deaf, an organization that helps the deaf.

Every Saturday, Gen helps public school teachers learn how to use sign language so that they can communicate with their deaf students. She also volunteered during the Deaf Camps held this November where deaf kids from Batino Elementary School SPED Center interacted with students from Miriam and Ateneo. After the camp, she felt really tired but she wasn't complaining. That's because according to her, "It's something different to be able to serve other deaf people."

Link Center for the Deaf may be reached at 426-0382.



WANT to speak with your hands? Let Gen show you how!

PETER MENDIOLA

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

A.K.A. COOL
It's an adult known as cool
they're the folks
in our own family
Or the people
we meet in school

I nominate ______________.
He/She is ________ years old and
is my ________________.
Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:
1)____________________;
2)____________________;
3)____________________;
4)____________________;
5)____________________;

My nominee lives a_________________________.
Give him/her a call at ________
or send him/her an e-mail at ________________________.
By the way, I'm ______________________________.
I'm__________years old.
My address is_______________________________.
You may call me at_____________________________.

Thinkathon
BY JONG ... AMPA

What's in a (New) Name?-1

LISTED on the left column are the new names of half a dozen countries and territories. Can you match each with its old name?

1. Bangladesh
2. Cambodia
3. Thailand
4. Iran
5. Taiwan
6. Sabah
7. Myanmar
8. Sri Lanka
9. United Arab Emirates
10. Ghana
11. Zambia
12. Ethiopia
13. Burkina Faso
14. Belize
15. Suriname

A. Siam
B. Burma
C. Gold Coast
D. Trucial States
E. Upper Volta
F. Formosa
G. East Pakistan
H. Dutch Guiana
I. Abyssinia
J. British Honduras
K. Kampuchea
L. Northern Rhodesia
M. North Borneo
N. Ceylon
O. Persia

Answers:

1. G
2. K
3. A
4. O
5. F
6. M
7. B
8. N
9. D
10. C
11. L
12. I
13. E
14. J
15. H

Ratings:

superbrain!
14-15

excellent!
11-13

good!
7-10

Peace Pals

By Eline Santos

EVER had a sleep-over at school?

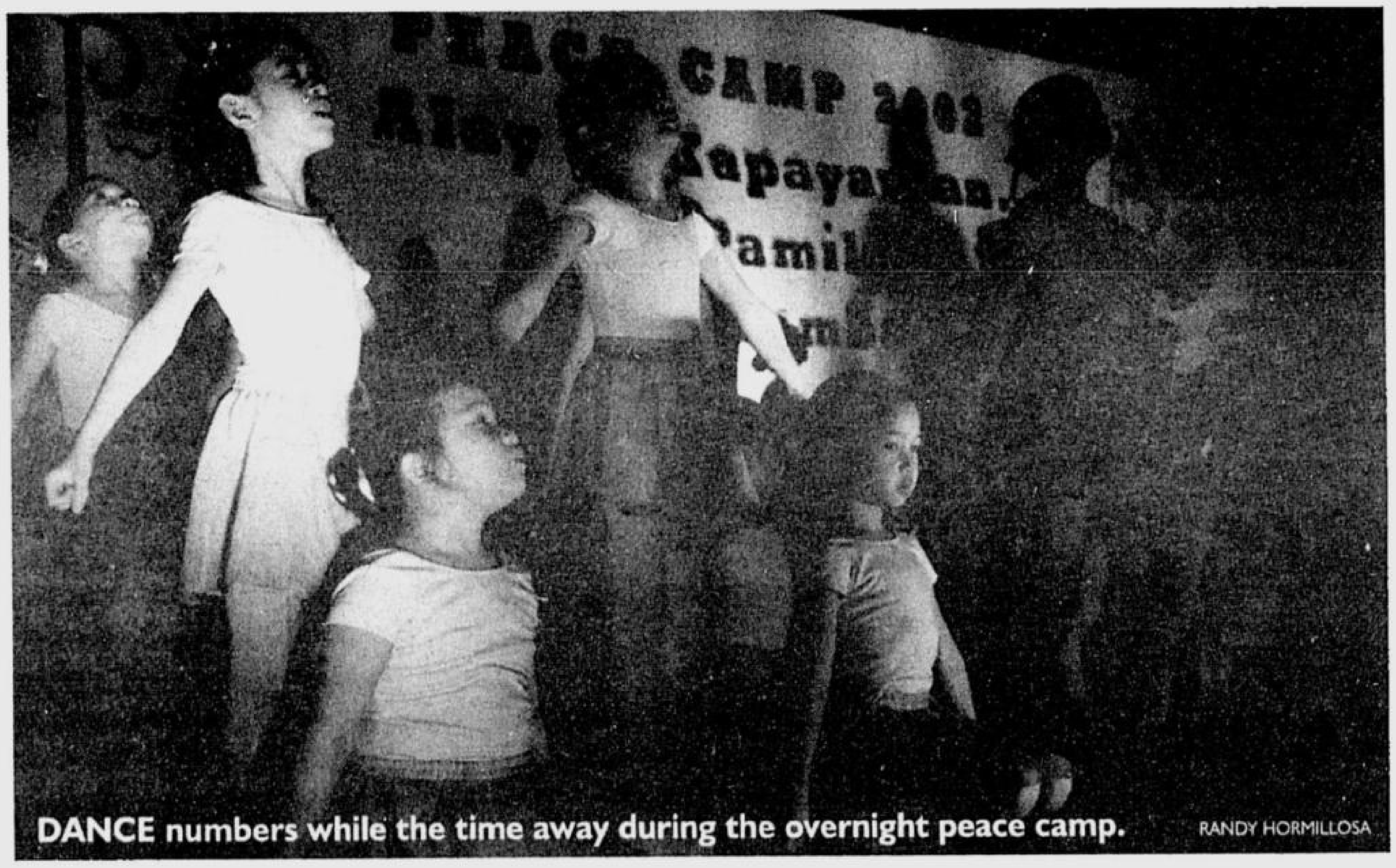
"Masaya!" is how most St. Scholastica students describe the experience. And many agree that "sleeping" is the best part of camp.

Just how much sleep do you get in an overnight activity? Singing, dancing and eating kept dreams away until past 10 p.m. when the grade schoolers were required to sleep. But do they?

"Last year we went ghost hunting. The guard caught us and brought us to the principal's office, that was around 12 midnight," Angie Buenaventura admits, now a seventh grader. While the teachers forgave their little escapade, "We got locked out of our classroom. The head teacher talked to our adviser so we could go back in."

"I admit I cried," Camille Kristin Viriña, 11, says of the first time she had to sleep over when she was a preschooler. "Before my siblings were studying here, so they would go to my classroom to check on me."

Mats, sleeping bags, pillows, CD players, and giant teddy bears also abound to help everybody catch some zzz's.


DANCE numbers while the time away during the overnight peace camp. RANDY HORMILLOSA

"My favorite part of the peace camp is when we have a midnight snack," says Lark Melanie Flauta, 10. "Because sometimes I have a hard time sleeping and the snack helps."

The Peace Camp started with the grade school kids in 1986 but beginning last year, the high school and college students joined the annual activity.

Barbie Ting, Grade 7, thinks they have the peace camp "so we can better understand the meaning of peace."

As most everyone agreed, 9-year-old Maria Karizza Batac defined peace as "loving each other and being united."

Angie adds, "I think the significance of the peace camp to every Scholastican is its prayer and work. What completes your life here in St.

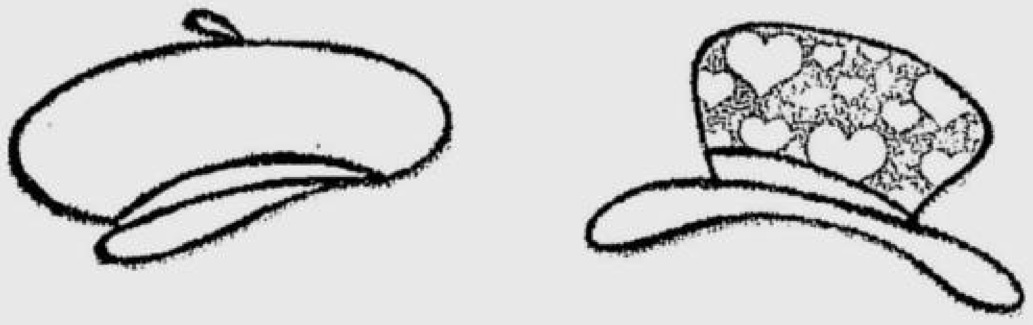
Peace Pals/ p. 12

THE LUNCH BOX

by Katrina B. Villa

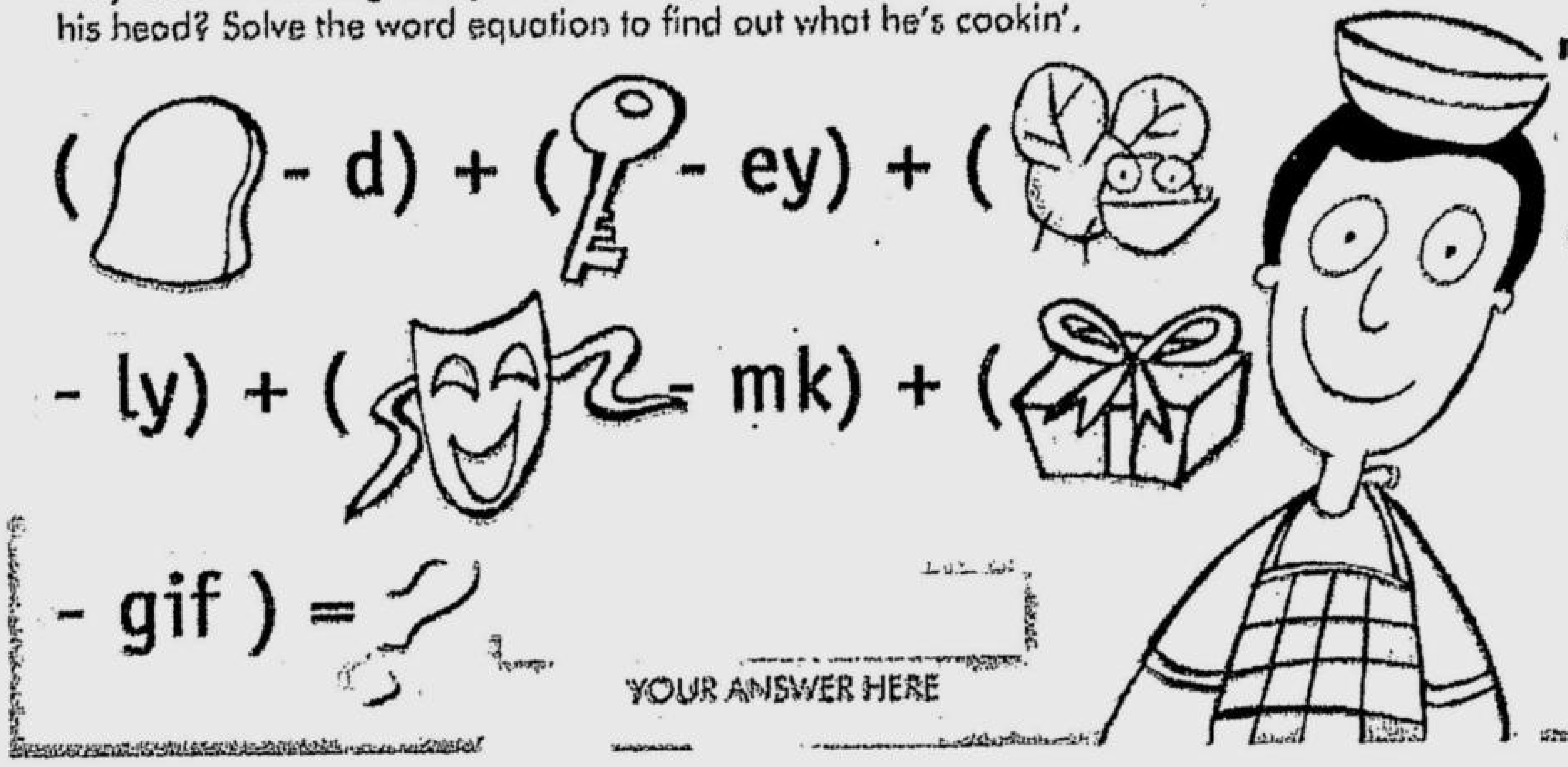
A MESSAGE FROM TWO LONELY HATS

WHAT'S A HAT FOR IF IT ISN'T WORN? WON'T YOU PLEASE DRAW SOMEONE (OR SOMETHING) UNDER US?



WORDMATH

Why is John wearing an apron, and why does he have a bowl balanced precariously on his head? Solve the word equation to find out what he's cookin'.



(- d) + (- ey) + (- ly) + (- mk) + (- gif) = ?

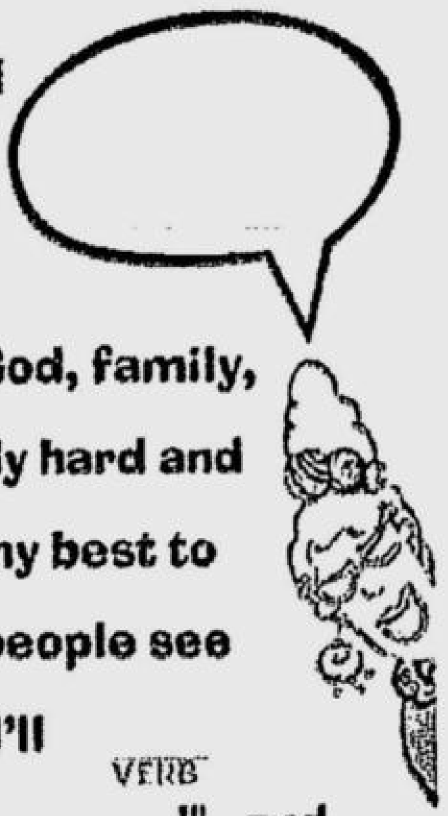
YOUR ANSWER HERE

BLANK OUT!

Have a friend supply you with the needed words before reading the whole paragraph aloud. Have fun with the results!

MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

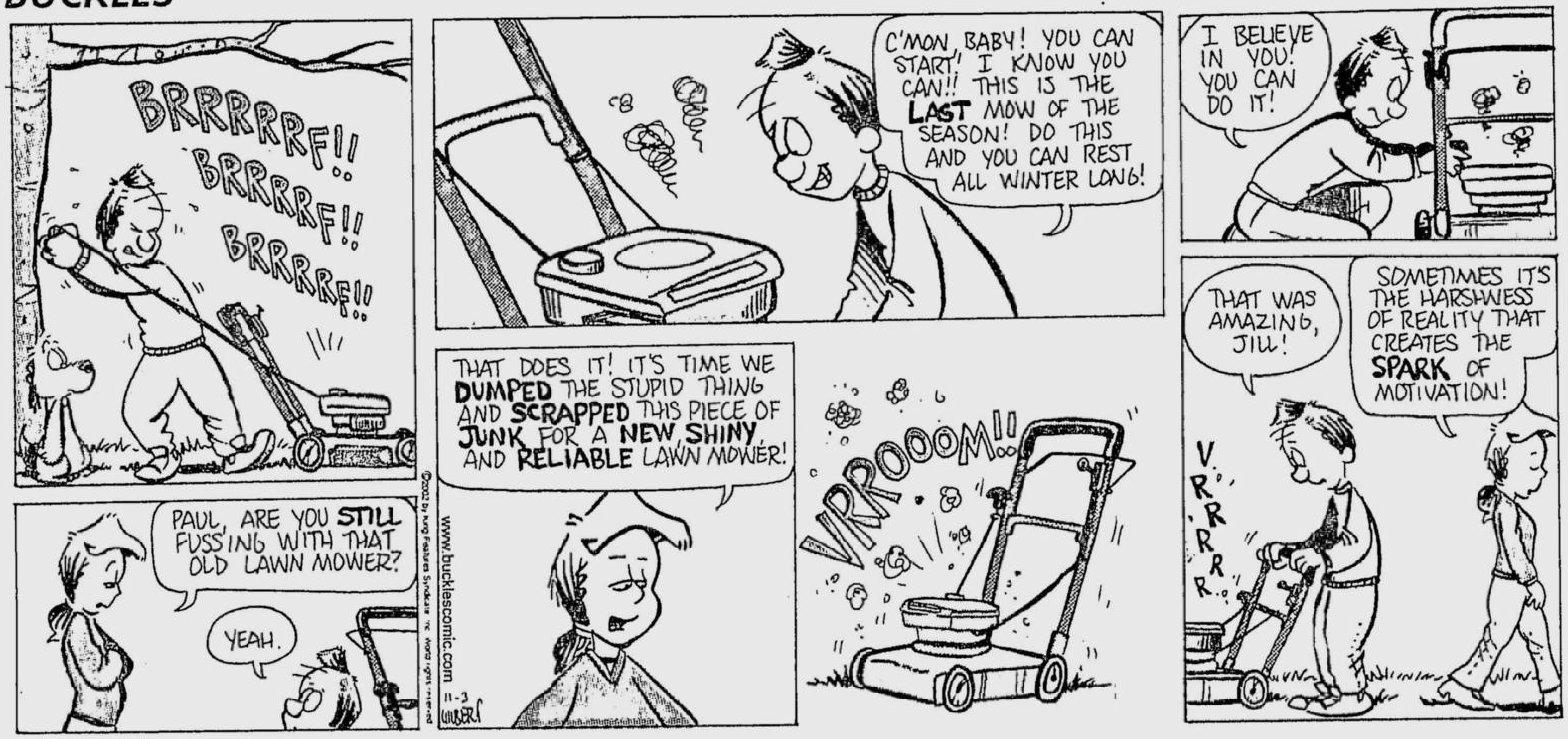
This year, I resolve to be a better
person. I will VERB more and
VERB less. I promise to love my God, family,
country, and my NOUN. I will study hard and
be a really good NOUN. I'll do my best to
make my NOUN ADJECTIVE. When people see
me VERB WITH -ing down the NOUN, I'll VERB
and greet them with a hearty "NONSENSE WORD!", and
they'll VERB and say, "There goes a truly
ADJECTIVE NOUN!"



NEW AND IMPROVED ME!

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


BRRRRRRF!!
BRRRRRF!!
BRRRRRF!!
C'MON, BABY! YOU CAN START! I KNOW YOU CAN!! THIS IS THE LAST MOW OF THE SEASON! DO THIS AND YOU CAN REST ALL WINTER LONG!
I BELIEVE IN YOU! YOU CAN DO IT!
PAUL, ARE YOU STILL FUSSING WITH THAT OLD LAWN MOWER?
YEAH.
THAT DOES IT! IT'S TIME WE DUMPED THE STUPID THING AND SCRAPPED THIS PIECE OF JUNK FOR A NEW, SHINY, AND RELIABLE LAWN MOWER!
VRROOOM!!
THAT WAS AMAZING, JILL!
SOMETIMES IT'S THE HARSHNESS OF REALITY THAT CREATES THE SPARK OF MOTIVATION!
VRRRRR
11-3
GILBERT

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Peace Pals

(from page 10)

Scho is the peace camp and the productions."

Preparations begin early for this annual affair.

In the first week of December a peace t-shirt painting contest was held where everyone had to paint their own peace symbol on a piece of cloth. During the camp, everyone wore her own symbol.

No one is exempted from the festivities. Even the personnel and maintenance staff gave a number to the tune of "One more Gift" that was very warmly applauded.

The grade school presentation followed with choir songs, dances from the ballet group and first graders, and excerpts from the play "The Nightingale."

"My favorite part of the play is when the lady found her son through a song," relates one of the cast members, 10-year-old Amira Nicole Dolendo.

The lead role of the nightingale was played by fourth grader Maria Criselda Pascual Marin.

Criselda says she likes being in the production "because I get to learn lots of things and I can express what I really feel in theater."

She admires the Nightingale character because "even though he got lost, he's very brave and he can sing very well."

After their presentation, the elementary students and preschoolers were asked to retire to their classroom-turned-bedroom.

"We can sleep, we can eat, we can play with our flashlights," smiles third grader Kim Mendoza. And of course it means bonding, bonding and more bonding.

"I get to sleep-over with my friends," beams 9-year-old Ma. Inna Paulina Palaña.

At the end of the day, it's all about friendship. And if a friendship is on the rocks, Karen Mamuyac, 13, advises, "If you know you have peace within yourself, why not make the first move? You don't have to wait for others. You can follow the path to peace."

TOY WORLD
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
ELVEN ARCHER
with bow-shooting action
BERSERKER URUK-HAI
with sword-swinging action
ÉOWYN
with authentically styled fabric outfit and accessories
LEGOLAS
with authentically styled fabric outfit and accessories
BILBO
FARAMIR
with sword-wielding action
GRISHNÁKH
with sword-slashing action
MERRY
with sword-slashing action and elven cloak
SM
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